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MEMOIR OF ROBERT ROBINSON.

[A Correspondent suggests that it might gratify our readers to extract from the American "Christian Examiner" a memoir which has lately appeared of Robert Robinson. We adopt the suggestion, because it is always interesting to see how characters which we value are appreciated in foreign countries.]

ROBERT ROBINSON was an extraordinary man. He was remarkable for the changes of his life; for his genius; for his native, vigorous, but somewhat undisciplined powers of mind; for his unwearied activity in different occupations wholly unlike each other; for his strong, benevolent, unrefined virtues, a little tinctured with vanity; for his excellent, though imperfect views of true religion, and of what constitutes the character of a Christian; for the real pleasure which it gave him to manifest his hearty contempt of all the various classes of pretenders, who elect themselves to constitute the world's aristocracy of saints; for the keen relish with which he was disposed to pull off and pull to pieces sanctimonious affectation, hypocrisy, pretension, and parade; and for a corresponding independence of character in all things, which often shot out into eccentricities, half natural, half a matter of ostentation. In his own day, we believe, he had no rival as an eloquent extempore preacher, with power to command the attention, equally of the refined and the most uncultivated. In the society of Baptists at Cambridge, which he may almost be said to have formed, his successor has been the famous Robert Hall, a man apparently with greater advantages of education, and a more finished writer, but not his superior in native powers, and not his equal in liberality of feeling and just conceptions of religion.

Robinson forced his way upward to distinction under very unfavourable circumstances. He was born in 1735. His father, who held an office in the excise, was a worthless profligate. He ill treated his wife, who had been led to marry him against her father's consent, partly from the unkindness which she experienced at home. He died when his son Robert, the youngest of three children, was about seven years old, leaving his family in distress through poverty. Of the two other children, one, a son, had been apprenticed to a painter, and the other, a daughter, to a mantuamaker. Robert was sent to a Latin school when six years old, where he recommended himself to the master by his abilities and good conduct, and made some profici-

ency in the classical languages. He likewise acquired a knowledge of the French, which he was enabled to do the more readily, as the French usher lodged at his mother's house. When he was fourteen, however, the poverty of his mother compelled her to take him from school, and endeavour to procure him some employment. An attempt to obtain a more desirable situation having failed, he was bound apprentice to a hairdresser in London, who had offered to receive him without a premium.

During his apprenticeship, he rose at four or five in the morning to study, procuring old books from stalls. He was tolerably attentive to his trade, and strictly virtuous in his conduct. His mind was much occupied by religious topics, and he was fond of attending a variety of preachers among the different sects of the Calvinistic Dissenters. But he was particularly attached to Whitfield, whom he used to call his spiritual father; and on leaving his trade, when he was about twenty years of age, he commenced preaching among the Methodists, which he continued for about two years.

During his apprenticeship and afterward, he kept a regular diary, which sufficiently proves his religious simplicity. In one place, he says, "I think this day our dear king is seventy-four years of age. O! my soul, bless God for the liberty we enjoy under his mild and gentle reign. Lord, bless him with the choicest of thy blessings, spiritual and temporal! I went to the monthly meeting at Mr. Hall's, and found it was good to be there. A good man in his own hair from Deptford prayed first; then old Mr. Cruikshanks preached a sweet sermon, very awakening, from Hebrews xi. 7—the oldest preachers are the most thundering of late. God prosper them. Mr. Hitchin prayed next very sweetly; then Mr. Conder dismissed us with an affecting prayer. Lord hear us for this sinful land." From the mention of the age of George II., this appears to have been written after he was twenty years old. In the following extract, the conception expressed of the piety of Frederick the Great and the Prussian army is somewhat startling: "As the Lord has been pleased so signally to own and bless the Prussian arms, (having on the 5th of November, when many I trust were praying for them, enabled him with about 1700 men,* to conquer an army of French and Austrians of 60 or 70,000: the Lord stirred up the King of Prussia and his soldiers to pray; they kept up three fast days, and spent about an hour praying and singing psalms before they engaged the enemy: O how good it is to pray and fight!) we kept this day at the tabernacle," &c.

Such characteristics of an individual like Robinson ought not to be kept out of sight. It is only with those who look but on the surface of things, that they can injure his fame, or affect the influence of what is excellent in his character and writings. They are highly instructive. It is a very remarkable fact, and a decisive proof of the original strength of Robinson's mind, that from being an apprentice to a hairdresser, and the author of such a diary, he rose to be one of the eminent men of his age, a keen and vigorous writer, and a most eloquent and powerful preacher. We learn from his diary, how different are the forms which the mind may assume at different periods of life. Nor is this the only nor the most important lesson which it teaches. It may instruct us, when disposed to regard such extra-

* This is the number given in the volume before us; but Robinson probably wrote 17,000, which would be near the truth. He refers to the battle of Rosbach, fought the fifth of November, 1757.

vagancies as it presents, only with ridicule, that they are not merely consistent with sincere piety, but that they may be the errors of a mind gifted with natural powers far beyond the common lot.

While he was preaching among the Methodists, he had an opportunity of giving proof of his Christian integrity. A rich relation who had promised to provide liberally for him, and had bequeathed him a considerable sum in his will, threatened to withdraw his favour altogether, unless he quitted the Dissenters. The threat was unavailing; Robinson persevered in what he believed his duty, and suffered the forfeit. Soon after he became a Baptist; and in the year 1759, when he was twenty-three years of age, began to preach to a small congregation of Baptists at Cambridge, with which he remained connected during the rest of his life. While yet among the Methodists, though almost without means of support, he had married. His wife's maiden name was Ellen Payne.

After preaching to his congregation for two years, he was regularly settled as their pastor in 1761. He had then, as he himself informs us, no prospect of assistance from his family. His wife's fortune, originally a hundred pounds, was partly gone. He had never inquired what his congregation would allow him, nor had any body proposed any thing. Their numbers, it is said, were only thirty-four, and most of them were poor villagers. They had been quarrelling together about the question of free communion; and the libertinism of many of the former members had given a bad character to the whole society. They paid their future pastor for the first year that he was with them, three pounds twelve shillings and five pence. "We lived," he says, "in bare walls, and they fit to tumble about our ears." His salary, however, gradually increased, till, in 1770, with nine young children, a wife, and an aged mother to support, he received ninety pounds, a sum which at that time was far from being equal in value to forty pounds when the *Deserted Village* was flourishing.

But "the love of his people," he says, "was worth a million." For them and for his family he laboured without respite. He was constant in his attentions to them, particularly to the poor and to children. Of the latter he used to say, "that if a child but lisped to give you pleasure, you ought to be pleased." He preached extempore twice, and occasionally three times, on the Sabbath; and delivered several lectures during the week among his scattered congregation, preaching sometimes in barns, and sometimes in the open air. He took the hours before they had commenced, or after they had ended the labours of the day,—the evening, or the early morning, and intermitted his lectures in hay and harvest times. But these were not his only labours. The sum which he received from his people being so inadequate to his support, he was obliged to provide necessities and comforts for his family by other means. He accordingly engaged in agriculture, first renting some land, then purchasing it, and afterwards making additional purchases, till he became a busy, successful, thrifty farmer. There is a long letter written in gay spirits, in which he describes, evidently with a little exaggeration, the multiplicity of labours and duties that came upon him in one day, in the latter part of May, 1784. He thus relates his occupations before breakfast: "Rose at three o'clock—crawled into the library—and met one who said, 'Yet a little while is the light with you: walk while ye have the light—the night cometh when no man can work—my Father worketh hitherto, and I work.'—Rang the great bell, and roused the girls to milking—went up to the farm, roused the horse-keeper—fed the horses while he was getting up—called the boy to suckle

the calves and clean out the cow-house—lighted the pipe, walked round the gardens to see what was wanting there—went up to the paddock to see if the weanling calves were well—went down to the ferry to see whether the boy had scooped and cleaned the boats—returned to the farm—examined the shoulders, heels, traces, chaff, and corn of eight horses going to plough—mended the acre staff—cut some thongs, whip-corded the boys' plough whips—pumped the troughs full—saw the hogs fed—examined the swill-tubs, and then the cellar—ordered a quarter of malt, for the hogs want grains, and the men want beer—filled the pipe again, returned to the river, and bought a lighter of turf for dairy-fires, and another of sedge for ovens—hunted up the wheelbarrows and set them a trundling—returned to the farm, called the men to breakfast, and cut the boys' bread and cheese, and saw the wooden bottles filled—sent one plough to the three-roods, another to the three-half-acres, and so on—shut the gates, and the clock struck five—breakfasted." The remainder of the letter is in the same style. In another, written in 1772, he says that he is attending his wife for the tenth time in childbirth; "three nights I have sat up, and what with the fatigue of overseeing so great a family, where one is old, another sick, and all, as it were, past help, or not arrived at it; what with public labours and a variety of *et ceteras*, I am now fit to sleep on the floor." In a letter written apparently a few days later, after mentioning the encouraging prospect of his wife's recovery, he says, "I have had a fine week, you must think, nurses, helps, &c., to the number of seventeen or nineteen in a day, with my own family; and I, poor I, all day forced to find eyes and feet, and thought for all."

But it was not merely for himself and his family that he thus laboured. Robinson was an eminently charitable and hospitable man, always ready to communicate from his own means, such as they were, to relieve the necessities and add to the comforts of others. In this particular, the sentiments expressed in one of his letters, were those on which he acted. In the original they are blended with some reflections on the vanity of learning in a Christian preacher, which he himself, we are confident, would, if called upon, have explained away and limited, till we should have differed from him but little or not at all; but which, as they stand, are expressed much too broadly and loosely. We mention this in order to explain the allusions to the same subject in the extract given. "I feel," he says, "three pounds, gained honestly by the sale of a fat bullock, produce more fire in my spirit, than all those pretty, but poor, tassels and spangles can give me. With three pounds I can set fire to ten cold hearts frozen with infirmity and widowhood, poverty and fear. Half a guinea will purchase the native eloquence of a grateful old woman; and she, if I set her to read, will give me a criticism of the heart, and the finest reading in the world. Oh! bless the old soul! what honied accents she pours into my ear! If I can honestly get, and afford to give away three pounds, it will always be my own fault if I be not very happy. Now then set me to preach. How is it possible I should be dull! The luxury of living to the glory of God, and the good of society; the joy of having saved a forlorn and forgotten cripple from hanging herself in despair; the felicity of setting fire to incense that burns to the glory of God; these are preparations of the pulpit, which the cold consumer of midnight oil never derives from his accents and quantities."

But, notwithstanding the pressure of all his other occupations, such was the untiring activity of Robinson's mind, and such too, it must be added, was the uncommon vigour and elasticity of his animal frame, that he was

able, in 1770, to commence a distinguished literary career which terminated only with his life. To explain in some degree his marvellous industry and the versatility of his powers, it must be remarked that his health was always firm, and that he enjoyed an almost boyish lightness and alacrity of spirits till the last year or two of his life, when his constitution gave way, in consequence of excessive exertions, and his confining himself too much to merely intellectual pursuits. Like other strong men, he was too confident in his strength. "I have but one nerve," he used to say, "and that comes from my breeches pocket."

In 1770, he commenced his well-known translation of Saurin's Sermons, the first volume of which was published in 1775. The several volumes contain valuable preliminary matter on different subjects. In 1774, he published his "*Arcana* ; or the Principles of the late Petitioners to Parliament in the Matter of Subscription." It has the reputation of being one of the most able works which have appeared on the subject. Its immediate occasion was this. In 1772, a petition was presented to Parliament by members of the Church of England, principally clergymen, but including, likewise, members of the professions of civil law and physic, praying for relief in the matter of subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles. It failed of its object, by a great majority in the House of Commons ; as did a motion to the same effect the following year. In 1772, likewise, a bill was introduced for the relief of the Dissenters, whose clergymen and schoolmasters were, and we believe are, *legally* exposed to heavy penalties if they undertake their offices, without subscribing all the *doctrinal* articles of the Church of England. Though it passed the House of Commons, by a great majority, it was thrown out in the House of Lords ; all the bishops, with one honourable exception, Green, Bishop of Lincoln, who was never afterwards translated, voting against it. The same was the fate of a similar bill the following year. These subjects excited great attention. Among the members of the Church of England who interested themselves in the cause of religious freedom, the most distinguished were Lindsey, Robert Tyrwhitt, then Fellow of Jesus College, Dr. John Jebb, Bishop Law, and, we regret to add, Paley. The Defence which he published about this time of the Considerations of his patron, Bishop Law, only increases the sorrow with which an honest man must read the poor sophistry in respect to subscription with which he afterward paltered with his own conscience, and taught others to do the same.

We happen to be writing with the "*Arcana*" on the table before us ; and in taking it up, the first passage on which we open is so characteristic of Robinson's style as to be worth quoting. The book is written in the form of letters. Addressing his correspondent, he says, "You know the story of father Fulgentio, preaching at Venice on Pilate's question, *What is truth?* He told his hearers that at last, after many searches, he had found it out, and held out a New Testament, and said that there it was in his hand ; but then he put it in his pocket, and coldly said, *But the book is prohibited.* Now what great difference would there have been, if he had said, *You may read the book, but its true meaning is prohibited?* Yet this is what all the Arminian clergy in England must say, if they speak consistently with themselves ; for in the opinion of all impartial judges, the established religion is Calvinism."

Robinson was a thoroughly *catholic* Christian, and an enemy of intolerance in all its forms. He regarded in the true spirit of our religion all attempts of sects and churches, of Episcopalians or Baptists, to impose the

subscription or the profession of their creeds upon others, by holding out bribes in the one hand, and inflicting penalties and disabilities with the other. He was a sincere and enlightened lover of liberty, religious and civil. He admired the American constitution, and regarded the character of Washington with the veneration to which it was entitled. His fame early extended to our country; and in one of his letters, he speaks, in a tone of exhilaration, of a visit from some distinguished Americans. He was invited by them to remove and settle among us. "Happiest of countries," says he, "peace and prosperity attend you! I shall never see you; but if I forget the ability and virtue that struggled to obtain, and actually did obtain, all that mankind hold dear, let my right hand forget her cunning."

We cannot transcribe these words without feeling that in this country the contest is to be won or lost, on which the hopes of mankind depend. If the clouds which have broken away in the heavens, and let down upon us a clear sunshine, unknown before, should close again, no human foresight can determine the continuance of the gloom and storms that will follow. We seem, however, not to be fully aware, that as the highest earthly blessings cannot be obtained, so they cannot be secured, without unremitting and strenuous exertions. Of late we hear, especially from ourselves, too much of our national praises, and too little of our duties and responsibilities. At one period it was necessary, in order to produce a proper feeling of patriotism and gratitude, that we should be reminded of our distinctions; but of late, national flattery, mingled with falsehood, has been administered in too much abundance—in draughts adapted to intoxicate or to sicken. Such flattery may be as pernicious to a people as to a monarch, and is commonly offered with the same selfish purposes to the one as to the other. We need those who will warn, and counsel, and exhort. A republic is in continual danger. There is no season of idleness or indifference for those who wish well to their country, their children, or mankind. As regards our national government, there is always danger of the existence of an unprincipled opposition, loving intrigue for its own sake, and having no object but the gratification of private ambition in its meanest forms; but restless, cunning, working its way steadily, and silent or clamorous in its operations as occasion may require. Such an opposition may embarrass government, defeat the most important measures, and consume the time of our public councils in noisy and endless harangues, and the discussion of questions brought forward only as part of the hostile machinery of a faction. Its members may even labour to dishonour their country in the adoption of public measures, for the sake of bringing discredit on those who are at the head of affairs. Taking advantage of pernicious prejudices, false principles, wrong sentiments, and corrupt passions, they may countenance and strengthen them; deceiving, misleading, and, as far as it is in their power, perverting the moral sense of all that portion of the community over which they can gain influence. To these dangers is our general government exposed; nor is any one of our confederated republics secure in its present prosperity. We speak on these subjects merely with the feeling of Christians and of moral men. As for the names of party distinction, no one can regard them with more indifference than we do. In addressing Unitarian Christians, we consider ourselves as addressing a very enlightened portion of the community, and especially as addressing men who understand well, that true religion exercises its unrelaxing authority over every act that may affect the condition of our country or our fellow-men.

We return from what is hardly a digression. In reading the lives of those in our own times who have felt and written like philosophers and Christians, we cannot but observe with what an earnest gaze their attention has been turned to America. The recollection of what has interested them most deeply in the progress of human improvement, necessarily awakens all our hopes and solitudes for our native land. Its fate becomes blended with their history.

Robinson was, as we have said, a thoroughly catholic Christian ; and this fact alone implies that he had just notions of what is essential in religion ; and attached no extravagant importance to any of those false doctrines, the reception of which others have made the necessary condition of escaping everlasting misery. Educated as a Calvinist, under such preachers as Gill and Whitfield, his belief was through life gradually changing, and becoming clear and rational. Upon the occasion, however, of Mr. Lindsey's publishing his celebrated *Apology for Resigning the Vicarage of Catterick*, he came forward as a defender of the proposition, that "Jesus Christ is truly and properly God," in a work, entitled "*A Plea for the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" In what sense he maintained this proposition, the reader of his *Plea* may probably think that he himself would have found some difficulty in distinctly explaining. He writes with great candour, and with much respect for the integrity of his opponent. His work was thought very able by those who ought to be best qualified to judge of its merit ; and his services were very thankfully acknowledged, not merely by Dissenters, but by Dignitaries of the Establishment. Proposals were made to him to accept a situation in the church, but of course were rejected. "Do the Dissenters know the worth of the man ?" asked Dr. Ogden. "The man," said Robinson, "knows the worth of the Dissenters."

On many topics of controversial theology his opinions seem, during much of his life, to have been loose and unsettled. In discussing them with his brother ministers, he sometimes treated such subjects with what seemed to them levity and sinful indifference. On one occasion he said, for instance, "Brother, I have delivered my present sentiments ; but I am going to feed the swans at the bottom of my garden ; on my return, perhaps I shall think differently." He had a habit very provoking in addressing another who was possessed with a solemn sense of the orthodoxy and importance of his opinions. He would gravely ask such a one to give a clear account of his belief. "Brother," he would say, "explain the matter ; when I understand the subject I will preach about it." His own orthodoxy respecting the Trinity, which, at the time when he wrote his *Plea*, would not have stood any severe test, gradually melted away. In a letter written in 1788, two years before his death, he thus expressed himself : "As to personality in God, a Trinity of persons, I think it the most absurd of all absurdities ; and, in my opinion, a man who hath brought himself to believe the popular doctrine of the Trinity, hath done all his work ; for after that there can be nothing hard, nothing inevident ; the more unintelligible, the more credible." It is remarkable that one commencing life as Robinson did, should have died as a guest of Dr. Priestley, from an interview with whom he had expected much gratification ; and that the first honours to his memory should have been paid in a funeral sermon by that eminent man.

Besides the works of Robinson which have been mentioned, his translation of Claude's *Essay on the Composition of a Sermon* is well known. There are others which attracted much attention at the time of their publication, and passed through repeated editions. They may be read at the

present day with interest and instruction. One of them is a "Plan of Lectures on the Principles of Nonconformity." It is a strong, able, undisguised attack upon the Church of England. Another is entitled, "A Political Catechism, intended to convey, in a familiar manner, just Ideas of Good Civil Government and the British Constitution." In the advertisement he says, it is the duty of all good citizens "to support the present excellent administration," which was the Rockingham administration. Notwithstanding, however, his attachment to the administration of which Mr. Burke was a member, his Plan of Lectures and his Catechism, some years after their publication, when Mr. Burke had separated from his party, brought upon Robinson an attack in Parliament from that eminent man, which he shared in company with Dr. Priestley and Dr. Price.*

Robinson's high reputation, his talents and virtues, gave him, at one period, great influence with the denomination to which he belonged. But it was shaken and weakened by his liberality of sentiment, by his resistance of all usurpation over the faith of others, and by his disbelief of many of the articles of the orthodox creed. In 1781, he published a tract, entitled "The General Doctrine of Toleration applied to the particular Case of Free Communion." The proposal of free communion was in itself obnoxious; and Robinson had besides the hardihood to affirm, that "there is, there can be, no moral turpitude in involuntary error." The expression of this opinion was regarded as highly offensive by Mr. Abraham Booth, a distinguished Particular Baptist, by Dr. Rippon, an eminent man, and others, who, conceiving that they possessed a monopoly of truth in this sinful and ignorant world, were outraged that their peculiar possession should be so undervalued. At some monthly meeting of Baptist ministers a voice was heard, which may not yet have reached the ears of all whom it is adapted to inform. Mr. Abraham Booth, as Dr. Rippon relates, "stated with an energy of mind and a force of argument never to be forgotten, that if error is harmless, truth must be worthless; and with a voice for him unusually elevated, declared, that every partisan of the innocency of mental error is a criminal of no common atrocity, but guilty of high treason against the majesty of eternal truth." The words of Mr. Booth and his admirer may sound to many like an echo of one of the Rev. Gabriel Kettledrumle's sermons in Old Mortality; but we are none of us, probably, fully aware of the state of things in which we live; and are apt, it may be, to believe the world wiser than it is. We are much mistaken if as gross folly is not delivered with as much arrogance and dogmatism, and almost as much effect, to congregations in our own metropolis. In the present case, the effect of this and similar denunciations was considerable. Many of his own denomination were led to view Robinson as an object of suspicion; and of its leaders, many, without doubt, had before regarded him with jealousy.

Still the weight of his character was such as to withstand, in a great measure, the attacks to which he was exposed. In 1781, a respectable meeting of gentlemen of the Baptist denomination, convened in London for the purpose, applied to him to undertake a history of the Baptists. He assented to their request; and was occupied in literary labours relating to this work during the remainder of his life. The fruits of his studies ap-

* See Annual Register for 1790, pp. 76, 77, and Dyer's Life of Robinson, p. 155. There must be an anachronism in the date assigned by Dyer to Mr. Burke's attack.

peared after his death in two large quarto volumes; the one entitled a History of Baptism, and the other, Ecclesiastical Researches. These works may be of some use to the student of ecclesiastical history; but they are among the least valuable of his writings. He wanted that long discipline of learning, and those comprehensive views to be derived only from a very extensive acquaintance with collateral subjects, which are necessary to qualify one for such undertakings. This want, no studies, pursued merely for the particular occasion, can supply. The facts which are learnt by the undisciplined student are often but very imperfectly apprehended. Their true character and bearing are not perceived. He can hardly fail to misjudge as to the proper inferences from them, and he is very liable to mistake and misstate the facts themselves. In order to accomplish well such works as those just mentioned, the mind must be accustomed to critical study and philosophical investigation; otherwise, we shall find in them loose, partial, exaggerated, false statements, only conformed in their general outline to what the author may think the truth. These faults are characteristic of Robinson's histories. They are distinguished, likewise, by an occasional levity of style, harsh judgments harshly expressed, and strong and sweeping assertions in coarse language, which, as the author is often in the wrong, give an air of flippancy to his composition. Still a man like him could not write two quarto volumes without affording abundant proof of the vigour of his mind. The amount of labour of which they give evidence is wonderful. It is curious, and may be useful, to perceive in what manner the facts in ecclesiastical history were viewed by one regarding them from the position in which Robinson stood, and expressing himself with so much independence. His remarks may suggest new thoughts. His language is often bold and forcible. To give a single example; after relating the proceedings by which Calvin brought Servetus to the stake, he proceeds, "Many have pretended to apologize for Calvin; but who is John Calvin, and what are his nostrums, which end in tyranny and murder, that the great voice of nature should be drowned in the din of a vain babbling about him?"

Robinson's devoted attention to his congregation, and particularly to the poor, has been already mentioned, and is one of the very pleasing traits of his character. When preaching in the villages through which they were scattered, he used to take pleasure in visiting his poor parishioners, and partaking, when asked, of their brown bread and *black* tea. The smallest expression of kindness from them, though it were but lighting his pipe, was gratefully acknowledged. "When a poor man," he said, "shews anxiety to administer to your comfort, do not interrupt him. Why deprive him of the pleasure of expressing his friendship?" He was piously attentive to his mother, who died at a very advanced age, having been long an inmate of his family. He was an affectionate husband and a fond father. He was very kind to his servants, familiar with them, patient with their weaknesses, and possessed the art of governing tempers thought by others to be unmanageable. He used to say that "nothing so much humanizes the heart as bearing with the infirmities of others." In his notions of education, he seems to have anticipated principles more generally adopted since his time. "He rather invited inquiry than imposed tasks." "His opinion was, that young people recollect longer what they discover by their own sagacity and observation, than in the way of formal lessons." A great part of his house was stuck over with cheap pictures which might serve for their instruction. "Children," he said, "catch their most useful hints in their most un-

guarded moments." "His system, however," we are told, "inclined to excessive indulgence;" but though the writers of his life say or insinuate this, they afford no proof that any ill effects followed from it.

About the beginning of the year 1790, as he was completing the fifty-fifth year of his age, his health began to give way, under the pressure of his various labours and cares. His body failed, and his mind shared in some degree its weakness. He undertook, for relaxation, a journey to Birmingham to visit Dr. Priestley. He retained the sprightliness of his conversation, but he felt that he was an altered man. He said to one who visited him while in that town, "You have only come to see the shadow of Robert Robinson." He preached, however, in Dr. Priestley's pulpit. The next Tuesday evening he passed in their company, entertaining them with his usual vivacity. He did not fear death; but had always expressed an apprehension of the distress of parting with his family and friends, from the affliction which they must suffer. He died that night, agreeably to a wish which he had expressed, "softly, suddenly, and alone." When he was found in the morning, the bed-clothes were not discomposed, nor his countenance distorted.

PROFESSOR SACK ON MR. ROSE'S VIEW OF RELIGION IN GERMANY.

[The following letter is from the pen of a learned and able German Theologian, Professor Sack, and addressed to the Rev. E. P. Pusey, a minister of the Church of England, who has lately published "An Historical Inquiry into the probable Causes of the Rationalist Character lately predominant in the Theology of Germany." Both parties, it will be seen, are of the Evangelical school, but the subject has lately attracted so much interest, that we have thought we should gratify our readers by printing the Professor's letter entire.]

You express a wish, my dear Friend, for my opinion upon Mr. Rose's book "on the State of Religion in Protestant Germany;" and, even at the risk of your occasionally meeting with views and opinions contrary to those to which you are attached, I will give it you; being fully convinced that we are agreed on the main points, and that you are yourself sufficiently acquainted with Germany to enter into the circumstances which either remove or mitigate the charges of Mr. R. You will allow me in the outset to own to you that a renewed perusal of the work of your countryman excited in me on two accounts a feeling of pain; on the one hand, that so much evil could be said of the Theological Authors of my country, which it is impossible to clear away; on the other, that this was done in a form and manner which could not but produce a confused view and false picture of the state of Germany. Gladly, however, I allow, that a very different mode of judging of German Theology would have given me infinitely deeper pain. I mean such an agreement with the prevailing views of the Rationalist school as would have presented them to the indifferent party in England under the dazzling colours of theological liberality. This would have seemed to me a yet more unnatural violation of the relation in which the English Church (taking the word in its widest sense) is called upon to stand to the German; and since Mr. R. has missed the real course of the development of the opinions of theological Germany, the harsh and oft per-

plexing manner in which he has delivered his statement may still indirectly be productive of much good, although indeed, in order to its attainment, much accurate investigation and renewed examination on both sides will be unquestionably indispensable. You will have already perceived (and indeed you were before aware), that I am not one of those Germans who have received this English work with a mere tissue of revilings, with renewed expressions of self-approbation, altogether mistaking the (as I do not doubt) excellent and Christian disposition of its author. Very different are the thoughts to which it has given rise in myself; the most essential of these I will endeavour briefly to lay before you.

First, then, I would remark the erroneousness and injustice of the imputation, that the Protestant churches of Germany, founded as they were on the authority of Holy Scripture, at the same time permitted any one of their ministers and teachers to vary from it even in their public instruction as far and as often as they pleased.* At no place and at no time was such the case. The Protestant churches of Germany have founded their public teaching and observances on confessions of faith, which their abandonment of unchristian errors compelled them to frame; and in these scriptural "confessions" themselves, were marked out the limits, beyond which the liberty of their ministers was not to be extended.

It was unavoidable and it was right, that the period in which an undue value was attached to the letter of these confessions, should be followed by another, in which a distinction should be made between that which constitutes their essential import, (to meet each error by the positive statement of the opposed truth,) and that which in the form of expression originated solely in the then state of doctrinal science; nor did this in any way destroy the right and duty to bind down the public teacher to the matter of the confession; nor did the conduct of individuals who, in literary controversy, when this difference had been perceived, spoke slightingly of the value of the confessions generally, by any means imply any renunciation of them on the part of the church. This, I repeat, never happened; and if ecclesiastical authorities, in times of an innovating boldness of teaching, did allow the reins to pass too much from their hands, and occasionally permitted the liberty conceded to their teachers to be unworthily abused, still this was only a transient, although great, error of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. But the church never abandoned aught of its rights, nor does their conduct establish any absurdity in the fundamental principles of the Protestant churches. Would it be a fair and just inference, if from the cases in the English Episcopal Church in which unprincipled clergy were for years continued in their functions to the spiritual detriment of their cure, one were to attribute to the church the disgraceful inconsistency, that, while she appointed the clergy for the edification of their charge, she at the same time permitted them to give offence by their unchristian life? If Mr. R. will not allow this, but ascribes it to the deficiencies of individual spiritual authorities, how can he charge the Protestant churches in Germany with inconsistency?

Closely connected with this confusion of the errors in the functionaries with the principles of the church, is the too great value which Mr. R. attaches to the preventive means for those evils which he observed in Germany. The English Episcopal Church may glory and rejoice in the character of her XXXIX Articles; she may from her point of view give them the preference over those longer formulæ which had their origin in histo-

rical struggles and in the living Christian faith of their composers (though I must repeat, that it is not in the nature of these confessions that the source of the weakness of the authorities is to be sought) ; she may think it right to bind her ministers by subscription to these Articles ; nothing of all this do we wish to depreciate ; still one cannot grant to its advocates that the disorders observed in Germany evidenced the necessity of laying " some check and restraint upon the human mind," nor that the binding force, the necessity of the subscription, the setting the letter of the symbol on the same level with its scriptural contents, can be regarded as the *source of the spiritual blessing* which the church enjoys. The former would too much resemble the controul which the Romish Church exerts over her members ; the latter appears to involve too strange a confusion of the prevention of an evil with the existence of a good.

The necessity of deterring the ministers of a church from the arbitrary aberrations of heresy, by binding them to human articles, and of thereby assuming the right to remove them when convicted of erroneous doctrines, may often, perhaps always, exist ; yet where it does exist, it presupposes an inclination to these heretical aberrations, and that in a degree proportionate to the apparent urgency of this necessity.

Such an inclination, however, in a considerable part of the clergy, is no healthy condition, nor one productive of blessing. Its suppression is but the prevention of a yet greater evil than actually exists within the system. The blessing, however, the blessing of doctrines delivered by enlightened and believing men, must be derived elsewhere ; from the spirit, namely, of grace and of prayer, which human forms can never give, but which they may by an unreasonable strictness hinder, though they cannot quench. When a church then so far confides that this spirit of grace and of truth, which is the Spirit of Christ, will illumine her teachers, if duly prepared and called, as to trust that such unscriptural, heretical aberrations, by which the basis of Christianity is shaken, should be but of rare occurrence ; she may, indeed, go too far in this originally noble confidence, and may find herself compelled by experience to return more decisively to the preventive means and rules comprised in the documents upon which she was founded : in no event, however, will she be tempted to look for blessing and prosperity from the establishment of the most definite verbal forms, from the erection of symbols independent of immediate controversy, and from a mode of restraint which places the human form of the doctrine on an equality with the word of Scripture. Had she such expectations, it were evident that she trusted more in the human formula than in the Spirit of Christ. While she trusts in this, she will indeed not neglect those means of protection ; still she will make it her first aim to impart to her young clergy, by a genuine theological preparation, that spirit which preaches the same gospel under forms, varying indeed, yet all within the limits of the word of Scripture, and which produces adherence to, and justification of, the doctrine, not after the letter, but after the spirit of the symbol : for ill were the state of any ecclesiastical authorities who should be unable to discern and to exhibit this spirit ; and lamentable the condition of any church, which, besides the legal fences against error, did not believe in a source from which the truth issues in such a living stream, that error itself must progressively diminish, the administration of the law become continually more enlightened, the means of repression less and less necessary. Such belief, however, and such endeavours form the principles upon which the Evangelical Churches of Germany acted. If they stumbled occasionally in this noble course, is that a sign they can

never reach the object they proposed? And if their principles are grounded on faith in the Spirit of Christ, should they abandon them in the midst of their career, and recur to those which centre on a reliance upon the letter of the human form, and upon the restraining force of the law?

But this leads further to those other charges of Mr. R.'s work, which indeed constitute by far the most important portion of its contents, the condemnatory representation of the direction which theology took for so long a period, and in part still takes, in so great a portion of the German authors: and here it is my duty both candidly to avow the pain which I also feel at such numerous aberrations from the purity of Christian truth; and yet distinctly to indicate that this evil, when contemplated in the due connexion with the free developement of theological science, (and how can science exist without freedom?) appears partly to have taken place beyond the limits of the church, partly to have been a necessary point of transition to a purer theology, partly to have been less widely extended than the author represents.

It is not necessary for us, my dear friend, to settle as a preliminary, whether those rationalist tendencies, through which the external and internal facts of Christianity are to be transmuted and solved into speculation and reflection, are disastrous and pernicious in any literature, and in any times.

Christianity is a divine fact, whose divine character, externally manifested, is inseparably united with an internal transformation of mind, which remains eternally distinct from any thing which man by his own device can produce: and yet will the rationalism of all times and all descriptions remove this distinction; this is its error, this its *πρωτον ψευδος*, and herein is it at all times equally destructive, whether it employ itself in the sublimest speculations on the ideas contained in the facts of Christianity, or whether, on the shallowest department of the common-place, empiric, factitious view of history, it strain to evaporate the miracles of the sacred relation.

Yet must we confess that this rationalism appears from time to time in every people and every literature. England has felt its full presumption and full perniciousness, in its deism. In France it united itself, though not at all times entirely, with materialism: and in Germany, it appeared in the form of a baseless, innovating interpretation of scripture, a shallow, would-be enlightening philosophy of religion.

If then the author rightly says, that the distinctive and specially revolting characteristic of the German rationalism consists in its having made its appearance within the church, and in the guise of theology; this indeed cannot be denied, yet it is not true to the extent to which the author represents it. Many of those writers whom he quotes for their unscriptural positions and opinions, as Reimarus, Becker, Buchholz, &c., were never in any ecclesiastical or theological office: they wrote as men pursuing in entire independence their philosophical systems; and if the influence of some of them widely extended itself even among the theologians, yet are not their opinions upon that account to be charged upon the theology and the church. Or can this be done with greater fairness, than if the deistical principles of a Hume and a Gibbon, nay of a Toland and Tindal, were to be imputed to the English theology? We may further take into consideration, that many of those scientific men who went furthest in a superficial and forced interpretation of the sacred documents, belonged to the philosophical faculties in our universities: in these it has ever been a principle to allow science to speak out entirely unrestrained, even in opposition to the doctrine of the church, in the confidence that the theological faculty, through greater depth,

or the greater correctness of its point of view, would be able to supply a counterpoise: if we take this also into the account, no small portion of the blame is already removed from the theologians and the church of Germany: the evil itself remains, but it appears more as connected with the philosophical and literary spirit of the time, than as a charge against the theology, which, however it may have come in contact with, and been affected by, the philosophical endeavours of the age, has yet its own independent history; nor are the several portions of this so indistinct and confused as would appear from the notes of Mr. Rose.

And this constitutes the second point which I would notice, namely, that not only in Mr. Rose's citations, but in the sketch given in the discourses themselves, the distinction of the different times and periods has been to so great a degree neglected: an omission which has entirely obscured the several points of transition by which theology progressively advanced towards a purer and sounder state. How can your countrymen form a correct image of our literature, when Lessing and Schelling, Steinbart and Bretschneider, Töllner and Schleiermacher, Bahrdt and Wegscheider, Herder and the anonymous author of the *Vindiciæ sacræ N. T. scripturæ*, are mentioned together, without any other distinction than the often incorrect dates? Most of these authors who are thus named together, were separated by thirty or forty years from each other; they may to the letter say the same thing, and yet the meaning in which they say it, and the influence which it has upon the times, are by no means the same; the earlier have, perhaps, suggested as an experiment what has long since been discarded; or they have started that as philosophers, which only the more superficial writers have attempted to convert into theology: several of them moreover had grown up in close connexion with a period in which it was a duty to contend against a false orthodoxism which clung to the letter alone: while many of the weaker moderns have proceeded to develop their opinions into positions, against which those nobler strugglers for truth would themselves with great earnestness have contended. The neglect of these historical relations, however, (which is not made good by the description of Semler,) casts a false light upon the whole view. Had our author possessed a vivid conception of the spirit of German theology, which toward the middle of the preceding century was more rigidly attached, than was ever the case in England, to a false system of doctrine, combined with a confined idea of inspiration, and a stiff, intolerant method of demonstration, which impeded the healthy process of a scriptural and deeper theology; had he moreover by the study of the noblest authors of our nation in that earlier period, whether in philosophy, or in practical or elegant literature, learnt the inward desire after a noble, genuine freedom of mind, for which at that time Protestant and Romanist longed, he would deem the rise of a new and partly daring direction of theology, not only a natural but an interesting phenomenon; he would have acknowledged that in part the legitimate requisitions of science, in philology and history, led to the adoption of that new course; that many also of those so-called innovators, were well conscious that they possessed a Christian and good scriptural foundation and object, but that almost all were so deficient in firm, scientific principles in the execution of these views, that too much freedom and too open a course was given to the bad, the capricious, and the irreligious, to violate the sanctuaries of the Bible, by a semi-philosophical babbling and a lawless criticism.

If then this point of view be adhered to, that all German innovations in theology discharged themselves principally in two main channels; the one

in which scientific clearness and freedom were the object of honest exertion, the other in which an inward indisposition toward the peculiar character of the Christian religion moulded the yet uncompleted results of historical investigation with a shallow philosophy into an unconnected, revolting commixture of naturalism and popular philosophy, all the phenomena in the history of theology will be sufficiently explained. That better race of authors, for the most part too little acquainted with the principles of the science of scriptural interpretation and the defence of religion, committed indeed many an error, but with a chastened judgment they again struck back into the right path. It was natural that they should occasionally fail at first sight to recognize the shallowness and pervertedness of inquiries of the second sort; and that to a certain degree participating in the fascination with which the spirit of that time had invested every species of tolerance, they should expose themselves to the injustice, by which their purer endeavours were subsequently confounded with those of the deistic naturalist;—an injustice frequently practised in these times in a crying manner, not by Romanists only, but by Protestants of too exclusive a system of theology. And now that this better sort of temperate, religiously-disposed, and scientific inquirers have gained a better basis, rule, and method, partly through their own more enlarged acquaintance with the province of their science (to which belongs also the acknowledgment of its limits); partly through the exertions of decided apologists and apologetic doctrinal writers; partly, and not least, through the endeavours of a deeper philosophy; and lastly, in part through the religious stimulus caused by momentous political events: now also that studies in ecclesiastical history, alike deep in their character and pure in their point of view, have quickened the sight for discerning the essence of Christianity; our German theology is attaining a pure and scientific character, which it could not have acquired, so unfettered and in such full consciousness, without first discharging itself of those baser elements.

Much is yet left to be done, much to clear away; but the more that genuine apologetic and hermeneutic principles, derived from the nature of belief and of thought, possess themselves of the mind, the more will those falsifying theories of accommodation, those wretched explanations of miracles, those presumptuous critical hypotheses, give place to a perspicuous view of the essence of Divine Revelation, to a living understanding of the prophetic and apostolic writings, and consequently to a purer exposition of the main doctrines of Christianity. You must not allow this hope to be obscured by what you may have seen of the struggles of supernaturalism and rationalism, or perhaps may read most obnoxiously exhibited in several of our periodical works. Within the province of proper theology this contest is not so important as it often appears, and the more it develops itself the less lasting can it be; inasmuch as an independent rationalism is irreconcilable with the very idea of Christian theology, and a bare supernaturalism, which goes no further than what its name expresses, does not contain the slightest portion of the substance and doctrines of Christianity. If then it is true, that through a genuine study of scriptural interpretation and of history, a better theology has begun to find place among us, the distracting influence which this conflict exerts must of necessity here also be gradually diminished: on the other hand it will probably continue, possibly yet more develop itself, in the more direct province of religion, in philosophy, and in politics, where, amid many a struggle and many an alternation, it may systematize itself in the contrast of a religious and of an atheistic, or of a sincere and of an hypocritical character of thought, and then again from the

various points of mutual contact unavoidably re-act upon theology. This danger is, however, no other than that to which the English Episcopal, nay even the Romanist, and indeed every part of the Christian Church, is exposed; and this disease, thus universal to mankind, may indeed delay, but cannot preclude, the restoration of German theology, derived from the genuine sources of philological and historical investigation, combined with that experience in faith which brings the mind and heart in vivid contact with them.

If, however, Mr. Rose has failed to perceive the necessary course of developement of German theology, so neither has he become sufficiently acquainted with, nor duly appreciated, the counter-workings by which the further progress of the evil was even in the worst and most perplexed times opposed and checked. He names indeed Storr as an opponent of the rationalist school, yet so that no one could thence perceive that this theologian was only the representative of a party at all times considerable and important. He names the philosophy of Schelling, yet almost as if all the impulses in religion and in the church, which, for almost twenty years, have been tending to improvement and increased unity, were derived from the suspicious source of mystical philosophemata. Neither was the case. Storr was but the disciple of the whole school of Würtemberg and Tübingen, of which he was subsequently the head; a school which, without being exempt from the errors of the time, has now for between thirty and forty years united in its writings the most conscientious earnestness with the deepest investigation. Here should have been mentioned together with Storr the names and the works of the two Flatts, of Süsskind, Bengel, Steudel, &c. To the same effect notice should also have been taken of Reinhard, who, chiefly by the pure means of works alike classical and theological, promoted an improved spirit in Saxony; of Knapp, who, but lately deceased, blended the purest orthodoxy with classical attainments, which might satisfy even English scholars, and with a depth of scriptural interpretation which was the object of respect in every school; of Hess, the venerable investigator and relator of biblical history; of the works of Planck on Theological Encyclopædia, and in defence of Christianity; of Kleuker in Kiel, Schott in Jena, Schwarz in Heidelberg, and of the direction (in part one of scientific depth) decisively opposed to the common rationalism, which the theological faculty of Berlin has by its historical and philosophical investigations, for more than fifteen years, imparted to theological study. All this must be viewed in connexion with the great number of well-disposed and Christian practical clergy in evangelical Germany, and with the almost universal removal of the lower classes from unchristian books upon religion. It should have been acknowledged, that in certain parts of Germany and Switzerland, Christian societies existed for the purpose of mutually imparting biblical and Christian knowledge, and for the circulation of the Scriptures, even previous to the (it must be confessed, somewhat too vehement) impulse given by the British Bible Society. It should have been noticed how the community of the Moravian brethren exerted, upon the whole, a very deep and gentle influence (even though not altogether exempt from error) upon the very highest as well as upon the lowest classes, in producing the reception of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, especially of the Atonement. It should have been remarked, that the entirely voluntary associations in Bible and Missionary Societies could not have been so universal and so great, as is upon the whole the case, without a considerable foundation of Christian disposition; this and

so much more therewith connected, must be more accurately known, investigated deeper, and exhibited in more connexion, before the theology and church of Protestant Germany can be displayed in their real form; and they would then certainly not appear so revolting and so offending as they are represented in Mr. R.'s work.

Should these remarks have now made it clear that the foundations upon which the theology of Protestant Germany may be raised to a high degree of pure Christian and scientific elevation, are, through the blessing of God, already laid on the deep basis of her improved principles, neither can one share the great expectations which the author entertains from the introduction among ourselves of fixed liturgies, and an ecclesiastical constitution resembling that of the Episcopal Church. Be it here undecided how far the one or the other could in themselves contribute to a better state of things; thus much at least is certain, that in a church accustomed, in the noblest sense of the word, to so much freedom as that of Evangelical Germany, and which, without any external interference, is at this moment conscious of a voluntary return to the fundamental evangelical principles, (a return in which all its earlier spiritual and scientific advances are comprised and guaranteed,) political restraint can be neither necessary nor beneficial. Those, however, who conceive that they can observe in the theology and church of Evangelical Germany an internal formative principle, tending to realize a high Christian purity, while they do not ascribe the same value as the author to the measure which he proposes, will attach themselves so much the more firmly to one which they regard as proceeding from the same principle, and of which the author speaks with an almost inconceivable suspicion. You will perceive, that I speak of the union of the Lutheran and Reformed churches in Germany; and I must confess to you, that it is the judgment passed upon this which appears to me to fix the stamp of misconception upon every thing else which is unclear in the work. Had the author but recalled to mind, that in the period of the greatest indifference to religion and church, the division of these two parties continued unregarded and unmitigated; that the endeavour to remove it coincided with the renewal of a warm interest in divine worship and in the church; had he allowed himself to be informed, that it originated with men very far removed from indifference, and promoted by that very evangelically-disposed King of Prussia from whom he himself anticipates so much, he could scarcely have ascribed the union to motives so bad. But had he (which he at all events both could and ought) informed himself, that the one difference in doctrine between the two churches is of such a nature, that the distinction can scarcely be retained in the symbolical books of church even by a straw-splitting nicety, (this is the case with regard to the doctrine of the Lord's Supper in the two churches,) while the other, that regarding election, never existed in Germany, (in that the strict Calvinistic doctrine is not at all expressed in the symbol of the German reformed church, the Heidelberg Catechism,) and that Brandenburg expressly refused to acknowledge the definitions of the Synod of Dort respecting it; had he weighed this, he would have spared himself this hostility against a work, in its nature originating in Christian brotherly love, and which has already produced in many countries, especially in Prussia and Baden, the cheering fruits of reanimated interest in the church.

Yet enough; for you, my worthy friend, I have made myself sufficiently intelligible; and should I, through your means, perhaps, contribute to prepare a portion of your countrymen for a correcter view of Protestant Ger-

many, I should deem myself happy in thereby repaying a small portion of the debt which the privilege of surveying the character of your English Church in its important and pure (though as yet unreconciled) contrasts, has laid upon me. And if I might express a wish which forces itself upon me at the close of this long letter, it is, that more of your young theologians would visit our Protestant Universities, become acquainted with our theologians, and hear our preachers, only not making a transient and hasty stay, nor living principally amid books, but acquainting themselves with the people, and the church, and the literature, in their real character, and ready for mutual, confidential interchange of their different talents.

With real regard and esteem,

Yours most sincerely,

CHARLES HENRY SACK,

Professor of Theology and Minister of the
Evangelical Church of Bonn.

Bonn, July 27, 1827.

THE SISTERS.

SHE died in Summer eve—the twilight pale
Fading in beauty from her languid eyes
Around her the last zephyr's gentle gale,
And on her ear soft mingling melodies—
She died 'midst fragrant dews and closing flowers,
In the delicious calm of evening hours.
And did she gaze on all the radiant bloom
That shone around her in its careless pride?
Amidst the coldness of approaching doom,
Of living beauty saw she aught beside?
Bright flowers, soft air, and richly glowing skies,
Had these her heart? had these her dying sighs?
Ah, no! There knelt beside her one alone,
Whose young, slight form had riveted her look;
A fair cheek scarce less pallid than her own;
A soft, clear brow, which bloom had all forsook;
Dark, heavenly eyes, filled with resistless tears—
The Sister of her first and happiest years.
She did not weep, but as those eyes she read,
With tenderness and grieving love o'erfraught,
With throbbing heart and faltering voice she said,
“Sister, recall me sometimes to your thought;
'Midst dearer hopes and gayer scenes, oh yet
Let not your heart this evening hour forget!
“Oh, sometimes, tho' all else should have forgot,
As the south wind shuts the last violet,
Come with full heart to this deserted spot,
And think of days when here we fondly met—
Retrace our infant sports—our youthful love—
And turn some sweet and sorrowing thoughts above.

“ The flowers shall breathe to thee their softest sighs,
And fancy mingle my departing breath,
And all these mournful evening melodies,
Oh ! they shall seem to thee my knell of death.
Sister, farewell !” A cold shade lightly fled
O’er the bright brow, and she had vanished !

J. E. R.

THE DEPUTIES.

To the Editor.

SIR,

IN the First Volume of the New Series of the Mon. Repos., p. 133, appeared some observations on the constitution, prospects, and objects, of the Society called “the Deputies,” to which I must refer your readers in the outset, in order to save myself the trouble of entering into detail as to several of the points then, nearly for the first time, brought before the public, but on which you said much of what I should now wish to say.

I have, then, a few words to say on the subject of this Society ; but you will permit me first to congratulate you and your readers on the feelings which must animate every friend to religious liberty in contrasting the position of affairs as contemplated by you at the period I have referred to, with the happy result which has attended the adoption of your counsels as to union, energy, and exertion. No one can doubt that this fortunate result was mainly to be attributed to the successful union of delegates from other bodies, who brought with them fresh talents, and infused new and younger feelings into a society which had certainly begun to exhibit marks of superannuation.

My principal object is now to suggest the propriety of the United Committee not separating without the Deputies taking the opportunity of consulting and considering with it whether some permanent renovation should not be adopted.

There are many particulars in which the Society of Deputies (if society it may be called, which has no constitution, or definite æra or plan of formation) requires considerable remoulding, if it is ever to form a well-regulated and orderly representation of the leading bodies of Protestant Dissenters.

As to name, style, and purpose, I can find none properly defined. It seems that the Society (so far as a purpose and plan of formation sufficiently continued to constitute identity can be traced) has, at various times, had various titles and component parts. Lately a question arose as to the legitimate object of application for the funds which it possessed, and none of the lawyers even could define it. At one time the repeal of the Test Acts seemed to have been considered the sole object of the Society ; at another, and for a long course of years, the care “of the civil affairs of the Dissenters” seemed to embrace almost every thing ; while in practice it extended to looking after little petty concerns of congregational annoyance or ecclesiastical vexation, by no means to be neglected, but still not comparable to the great objects at which a society should aim, which purports to represent the feelings of such a body of persons as the Protestant Dissenters of England ought to be.

As to constitution, “the Deputies” form the only society ever perhaps

heard of in England which has *no rules; no laws* whatever exist except as they can be gathered from practice. There are no resolutions constituting the Society which can be referred to as the rule of its proceedings. It has (as might be expected) been exceedingly lax and irregular, and scarcely a meeting passes without discussions about matters and principles which in every other society are fixed and certain. Till within a very few years, the Committee never made a Report. It was not till last year considered *regular* for a question even to be asked as to the Treasurer's Account; and even members of the Committee declared that they knew nothing of the funds or income of the Society. Is it proper, or even prudent, that such a society should go on without some definite constitution or declaration of its objects?

By the disclosures which some discussions last year brought out, it is now publicly known that the Society had, from want of any very deep call on their resources, accumulated about the value of £8000; the income of which (without calling upon any congregation of late for a shilling) had carried on all the ordinary purposes of the body of Dissenters for a great many years. It was certainly not too much for such a purpose; and many cases, where assistance had been of the most eminent service, bore witness to the policy of keeping up such a resource.

The call which the late expensive proceedings have occasioned, and some other expenses, will, perhaps it is no over estimate to reckon, diminish this fund more than one-third, and thus, unless it is replenished, the common exigencies of the body will not be supplied. Perhaps Dissenters in the country have not been fully aware of the extent of the agency for good which the administration of this fund (always ready when wanted) afforded, nor of the serious injury which would often have accrued from its absence, while the whole has cost the country nothing, so far as the present generation are concerned. There can surely be no objection to the Dissenters buying the late increase of their liberties at what it has cost; by replacing the fund which has been applied for the purpose, in order that it may continue to be devoted to the same useful purposes. If the repeal of the Test laws is not at least worth the pecuniary expense of procuring it, the attempt might as well have been omitted.

No one surely can imagine that it is desirable to break up or cripple an institution representing the most influential portions of the Dissenters, at the time when their position in society has been raised,—when it becomes more than ever desirable to see them respectably represented,—and when all the objects which, for thirty years, occupied their exclusive attention remain, and must remain, to be held in view. It is no time to take off a watchful eye from the protection of our liberties when they have become more valuable. If we have less left to *gain*, we have more to lose, and abundant occasion for resisting *encroachment*. The session which repealed the Test Act did not pass over without witnessing one of the most scandalous attempts ever devised, to add new burdens to the Dissenters in favour of the Church; and without active and prompt resistance this attempt would have been successful. Have the Dissenters no other points beside the Test laws, in which their liberties are imperfect? Have they no relief to seek on the subject of registration—to say nothing of marriage? Are they not at least bound to support their own institution for the registering of births, which they have been lately advised to take measures for extending to deaths?

But I am very much inclined to look at the kind and conciliatory feelings

which arise out of an association of various sects for a common purpose, as alone a sufficient reason for preserving and extending such a society. No one can have witnessed the proceedings of this year, without rejoicing at the liberal and generous feelings which arose out of the banishment of petty sectarian feelings, and without being conscious that the Dissenting body rose in the estimation of the best friends of liberty and virtue in proportion as it acted upon enlarged and catholic principles.

Allow me to enumerate a few points which I think should now be taken into consideration by the Deputies, and by the Dissenting public, in contributing to place their representatives in a position suited to their increased and increasing importance in the community, at a time when they have assumed a legal position, unknown before; entitling them to share in all the honours and offices of the state, and therefore, surely now, if ever, entitling them to look for the speedy removal of any remaining badges of inferiority. I must premise that I am looking, and that what I should suggest is designed to tend, towards a permanent and duly organized representation of a class of men of immense importance to the cause of freedom; who have interests to preserve and principles, in many respects, distinct from those of other branches of the community; and whose influence, while exerted (as I trust it always will be) for good, it is exceedingly important to preserve and direct, as contributing very much to give a correct tone to religious, moral, and political feeling throughout the country.

1. "The Deputies" should come to resolutions *declaring* their object and general constitution; I say *declaring*, because I would on no account break up the continuity of an ancient society which is on many accounts valuable and dear in all our recollections, by pretending now to *form* a new society, or by doing any thing which should not purport to be an acting upon the continuing basis of former proceedings. To the general frame of this constitution, as collected from practice and so declared, should be now added minor by-laws or regulations, into which may be introduced such variations as the present state of things point out. My object in short is, that this Society (like all others which pretend to regularity and consistency) should be able to point, for its guidance and that of the public, to *written law*, not to an uncertain *common law*, which is disputable at every inch.

2. Steps should be immediately taken to restore the permanent fund, which *ought* not to be less than £10,000—indeed more, if a suitable house or office is to be appropriated to the Society. It would deserve consideration whether the congregations sending Deputies should not be required to send with them a small annual subscription; but to this there would be the objection, that the burthen would thus be thrown on the London congregations, which, from their contiguity, would naturally send the greater number of the Deputies for ordinary purposes, whatever rules might be made (as ought to be the case) to admit country Deputies if they chose to come. It seems better, more honourable, and less troublesome, to establish at once a permanent fund by replacing (and something more) the amount spent on the late struggle, leaving the Society to appeal to the public (as on this occasion) when unusual demands arise. Nevertheless, it is extremely desirable that congregations should make a point of bearing the exigencies of such a body in mind; and that they should not be content, as they have been for a series of years, to let all the civil affairs of the united body be conducted in silence, without any interest being excited, or one shilling being subscribed by those who were every day deriving the benefit. Experience has shewn that this was the sure way to send the Society to sleep; that inquiry and

remonstrance came with a bad grace from congregations which had done nothing for the interests of the Society; and that any call on their funds, however small, would have excited interest, roused inquiry, and stimulated exertion.

3. Although the parties to whose personal exertions we must permanently look to discharge the functions of such an association will mainly be the Deputies of London congregations, there is no reason why *any* congregation wishing and applying for connexion with the Society, and for liberty to send Deputies, should not have that right; and if the annual meeting was held at a proper season of the year, and a greater interest was given to such meeting, there is no doubt that many from the country *would* attend: of course, none but those within the twopenny post need be *summoned*.

4. I, for one, say, "Abolish the exclusive title of the Three Denominations;" a title which seems to mean nothing but that the Deputies are a set of persons, many of whom meet under false colours. The names, in many respects, have ceased to have any correct application. Even the Chairman, I believe, sits under what, with all submission, I must call a false pretence,—that of Essex Street being a Presbyterian congregation. Besides, why should the Dissenters of England be sulky, and recognize no one as belonging to them but those who will wear their three-cornered hat? Let us have a Society of "Deputies of the Protestant Dissenters of England."

5. The Society should have a permanent office; a house suitable in respectability and appearance, and containing accommodation for all the meetings of Dissenters, and for their various concerns. There the Registry should be kept, and the Secretary have his office. The Registry alone, and a saving of the expenses now incurred in tavern meetings, would go a considerable way towards maintaining the establishment.

6. A committee and officers being appointed to manage the business, the main body need have only one yearly general meeting, to which the committee should make an annual address or report suited to the occasion, and from which would, at all times, emanate a respectable and influential expression of the feelings and opinions of the Dissenting community.

7. It will deserve consideration whether provision should not be made for the admission of Ministers as part of this general meeting. I see no reason why the minister of every congregation sending Deputies should not be invited to attend the annual meeting, though probably the Committee for managing the affairs (which are almost wholly civil) should, in the *general way*, continue to consist only of laymen. Every one knows how powerfully the accession of strength from the body of ministers operated during the late proceedings in infusing energy and activity, and occasions would probably often occur on which it would be very useful and proper to call in their assistance, by adding a selection to the Committee.

8. There is no doubt that the extension of the objects of the Society, and the elevation of the position of themselves and their constituents in society by the recent Act, would impose upon the Deputies the duty of increased watchfulness in the conduct and proceedings of such a representative body. It would not be merely the particular or sectarian interest of the Dissenters which they would have to promote and attend to; they would have to consider themselves a body to which England, and even Europe, would look as the hereditary guardians and assertors of liberty, and of true Protestant independence of mind and thought. It would be their business and duty to promote every thing which was conducive to the interests of religion and virtue, of knowledge, peace, charity, and benevolence. It would be theirs

to lead by their precept and example to a better understanding of the rights of conscience, and of the mutual duties which Christians owe to each other; to carry on to perfection all that was great, and good, and amiable, in the principles which their fathers professed, and for which they suffered; and it would be their duty, from which they should never shrink, to repel and expose intolerance and bigotry, under whatever disguise or pretence they may seek to influence the passions or debase the mind of man.

Though I cannot say that I belong to either of "*the Three Denominations*," I beg to subscribe myself,

A DISSENTER.

LINES.

"That ye sorrow not, even as others who have no hope."

Oh child of sorrow! raise thine eye,
Thus sadly bending o'er thy woes;
Behold, where Mercy from on high
Descends, to give thy breast repose!

Weep not, as hopeless mourners do,
Who trust to Nature's light alone:
Ruins of time and death they view,
And 'midst the dreary prospect groan.

Weep not like them!—Faith points thy gaze
Beyond weak Reason's farthest scope,
To brighter scenes than earth displays,
And bids thy drooping soul to hope.

Weep not the tears of wild despair,
When conscious guilt alarms thy breast;
Behold the Gospel message there,—
"Sinner, repent,—and be at rest!"

Nor murm'ring weep, when pleasure dies,
And fancied joys thy grasp elude:
Kind is thy Father,—kind as wise,—
He gives,—withholds,—and all for good.

Weep not, when storms thy course assail,
When Sorrow's gath'ring clouds come fast;
For struggling Virtue shall prevail,
And reach her peaceful home at last.

Weep not, desponding, o'er the tomb
Where sleeps the friend, belov'd and lost;
Nor let the silent mansion's gloom
Thy comforts and thy hopes exhaust.

To these dark scenes shall light succeed,
And earth shall cease,—Death's reign be o'er;—
Then Friendship's wounds no more shall bleed,
Affection's ties be rent no more!

Then tread with patient step thy way,
God's faithful word thy feet shall guide;
Nor fear the ills of life's short day,—
Religion's comforts still abide!

H. H.

REVIEW.

ART. I.—*Manuel des Officiers de l'Etat Civil, pour la Tenue des Registres.*
Par A. E. Le Mott. 2e Edit. Paris, 1827.

WE have read this little volume with some curiosity, and a great deal of regret at the unfavourable comparison which must be drawn between the French institutions, to which it relates, and those of our own country. Our system of parochial registration (if we can properly call it a system) is fraught with absurdities, imperfections, and inconveniences; it belongs to a very rude age, and to one in which, if diversity of religious opinion existed at all, all toleration for its exercise must have been set at nought. To those to whom it at first occurred that it might be useful that some record should be kept of births, marriages, and deaths, an obvious step towards such a record would occur in the list which might be kept of the baptisms, of the religious celebrations or acknowledgments of marriage in the face of the church, and of the burials which should take place. The imperfections of such documents, as applied to a whole population, were to be sure obvious. It was not certain that all children would be baptized; and, if they were, the time of birth was no way shewn by the registration of the baptism. Marriages (in many countries at least) might not all be acknowledged in church, and burials might, in many cases, also escape clerical superintendence; but the plan might work tolerably well as far as it went, and, in the absence of a better, might pass muster among the institutions of a country not much advanced in civilization, and where diversity of religious worship was little known, and never recognized. But when the church ceased to comprise any thing like the whole of the community, and when sects were allowed to establish themselves in their separate congregations all over the country, one can hardly imagine how the same country could go on persisting in depriving itself of all legal means of registering the heterodox portion of its population,—could persist in shutting its eyes to the notorious fact, that the church services, and, consequently, the church registers, did not, and could not, comprise any thing like an accurate record of the population—that they could only be made to do so by enforcing conformity when the law pretended to waive it—that for all legal purposes such a record became grossly defective—and that, in a statistic point of view, the delusion which any reliance on such documents would produce must be ridiculous and humiliating.

We shall consider in detail some of the leading features of our system when we have stated the outlines of the French plan, as developed in the little Manual before us.

The Code having detailed the general formalities to be observed for recording births, marriages, and deaths, constant attention has been given to the regular developement of the details in practice, and an efficient class of municipal officers has the whole under constant superintendence. With a view to remove all the irregularities and clashings of interests which must arise from intrusting such duties to the clergy (in any country at least where men were not or did not mean to continue for ever all of one mind in religious matters), the official superintendence of the register and of the docu-

ments and acts on which it is to be founded, is committed to the officers of the *Etat Civil*. The *Maires* of Communes are the persons who occupy this station, and their functions relate of course to the following divisions:—the record of births, of marriages, and of deaths; as to all which they prepare and enter the necessary acts. The accuracy and regularity of the Register-books are guarded by minute regulations; they are kept in duplicate, and closed at the end of each year with such formalities as to prevent interpolations. Alphabetical indexes are formed, immediately on the annual closing of the register, in a tabular form; and one copy of the register and index is sent to the office of the *Tribunal de première Instance* of the district, where it is examined by and placed under the superintendence of the *Procureur du Roi*, whose duty also it is to instruct the *Maires* and see that they do their duty; the other register and its index remain in the *Archives* of the *Commune*.

Every ten years another complete alphabetical index is made, and the extreme accuracy of all these operations furnishes the means of forming the most perfect statistic documents for every purpose for which a government can wish to concern itself with the state of population.

The entry of a birth is founded on a declaration which is required by law to be made within three days after its occurring; the infant itself being necessarily produced and identified. The formalities and facts necessary to this declaration, and to the entry thereupon in the register, forming what is called the "*Acte de Naissance*," are as follows:

1. The year, day, and hour when the declaration is received.
2. The name and quality of the public functionary receiving it.
3. The name, age, profession, and residence, of the party declaring the birth (generally the father or a near relation, &c., according to circumstances).
4. The presentment of the child.
6. }
7. } The day, hour, and place of birth.
8. }
9. The names, profession, and abode, of the father and mother.
10. The name given to the child (the Manual urges the importance of not giving the child more than one name).
11. The names, professions, and abodes, of two witnesses present at the declaration and presentment.
12. The fact of the declaration having been read over to them.
13. The signatures of the functionary, the declarer, and the witnesses.
14. The mention of any cause which may prevent any of the parties signing.
15. The entry of the whole on the register-book, without any blanks, abbreviations, or figures.
16. The noting of any erasures, &c.

The form given is not altogether the best which could be devised; a tabular form is always most convenient, and in some other respects obvious improvements in the plan might be suggested. The presence of two witnesses to the functionary's reception of an official act seems not very necessary; the attendance of a second witness to the birth itself would be a far greater security. The mother's maiden name, and her father's name and description, ought not to have been omitted.

It is well known that the contract of marriage, in its legal requisites, is

regarded in France as entirely civil. It is surrounded with many formal precautions, all of which are detailed and explained in the *Manuel*. At present we are only considering the form of registration, and (supposing all the publications, consents, &c., to be correctly vouched) the act of marriage, as it appears on the register, comprises the following facts or operations:

1. The year, month, day, and hour, of the reception of the act.
2. The quality, &c., of the public functionary.
3. The place of celebration.
4. The names, &c., of the married persons.
5. Mention of the fact of their being of, or under age.
6. The names, &c., of their respective fathers and mothers.
7. Their consent to the marriage.
8. The fact of previous publications of the intended marriage.
9. Mention of the fact of there having been, or not having been, any opposition, or of its removal.
10. That the 6th chap. of the Code, "On the Mutual Rights and Duties of Married Persons," was duly read to the parties and witnesses.
11. The declaration of the contracting parties of their marriage.
12. The pronouncing of their union accordingly.
13. The immediate drawing up of the act.
14. The names, &c., of four witnesses present.
15. Declaration of their relationship.
16. The reading of the act to the parties and witnesses.
17. The signatures of the officer, parties, and witnesses.
18. Mention as to those who cannot sign.

The form of the act enumerating all these particulars is necessarily long, and if arranged tabularly would probably be much simplified. We may observe, too, that it would seem much better (especially where the forms are so long) to adopt one plan, as to marriage registers, of having the register-book printed in blank forms.

In cases of deaths, it is the duty of the public officer to attend on the spot, and receive the legal declaration of the fact; and without his certificate of this public duty having been performed no burial can take place. This visit, of course, supplies a very proper opportunity for ascertaining the cause of death, not only for purposes of statistic inquiry, but for the purposes of investigation in cases of violent death. In such cases the officer (after calling in medical opinion) transmits information to the *Procureur du Roi*. The act drawn up in the register-book comprises the following particulars:

1. The year, month, day, and hour, of receipt.
2. The name, &c., of the officer.
3. The names, &c., of two witnesses, and their relationship, if any, to the deceased.
4. The day and hour of death.
5. The name, &c., of the deceased.
6. The name, &c., of the deceased's husband or wife, if one is left.
7. The names, &c., of the deceased's father and mother, as far as is known.
8. The place of death.
9. The reading of the act to the parties appearing.
10. The signatures by the officer and parties.
11. Mention of any reason for not signing.

As to births, marriages, and deaths, abundant directions are given in

the *Manuel*, with respect to special cases, such as the admission on the register of those which have occurred abroad, the correction of erroneous entries, and a variety of cases which it is obvious that any complete system must contemplate, and for which it can easily provide when placed under the superintendence of an efficient body of officers responsible for their acts. A register thus kept with vigilance, and preserved in duplicate, and carefully indexed in alphabetic order, both annually and decennially, seems to leave nothing wanting for the completion of a system fully adequate to all the exigencies of a well-regulated community.

We shall now proceed to notice as briefly as we can the state in which registration exists in this country, its imperfections, and the causes from which they arise.

The only registers which are received as direct evidence of the facts they contain (as coming from official sources) are the books kept at the parish churches for recording the baptisms, marriages, and burials, there had and solemnized; and we shall proceed to consider each in order, reminding our readers that the whole efficiency of such a plan depends on the assumption of what is known to be untrue, namely, that all the population are members of the Church of England.

As to Births.—One fundamental objection to our system of registration is obviously this, that it is no proper record of birth at all. It is true that one may reasonably conclude a party to have been born at least some time or other *before* he was baptized, but how much sooner no one can tell; and from this absurdity it has often resulted that, in fact, people have actually attained twenty-one, and exercised most important acts, when by the only known official record and evidence of their legal *status*, they were under age; and for safety and convenience, on proof, it has been considered advisable afterwards, on attainment of majority according to the evidence, to confirm what had been done. To meet this deficiency, the birth has been lately added to the register, in the entry of baptism; but on no adequate authority, the minister's record of hearsay being thus made evidence of the fact, contrary to all ordinary rules. The form, too, in the register-books, is essentially bad, as not containing the mother's maiden name, without which no sufficient linking together of a pedigree can be effected.

But, supposing all this well done, what becomes of all those children of persons passing under the denomination of churchmen, (among the poor especially,) who neglect baptisms from various causes? Where go all the Catholics, the Dissenters, and particularly the Baptists, who cannot be recorded even on the unofficial register-books of the Pædobaptist sects? The law, in its dignified self-complacency, knows no such persons as these; the law supposeth every man to be churchman.

The Dissenters, to remedy the evil as far as they can, have established, what it is disgraceful to every government that individuals should be left to provide for themselves—a register of *births*, kept at Dr. Williams's Library. This is formed on declarations, signed by the parents and competent witnesses present. But a record of this character (though in its nature far better than the Church Register, and containing a clue to the best direct evidence) has some legal difficulties to contend with, arising from the non-official character of its keepers.

As to Marriages.—The better opinion decidedly is, that marriage by the old law of England, as of many other states, was essentially a civil contract, and that it required no ecclesiastical sanction for its validity. The marriages of Jews and Quakers have no express sanction given them by the

Marriage Act, and their validity, therefore, at this moment, (excepted as they are from the provisions of that act,) rests on the same grounds as those of all Dissenters must have done after the Toleration Act, and previous to the Marriage Act. It is true that the Ecclesiastical Courts considered themselves as entitled to disavow all marriages not contracted according to ecclesiastical ordinances; and, for aught we know, they might even *now* refuse administration to a Quaker or Jewish widow. But at common law the marriage was good, and the heir of such a marriage would have inherited.

Convenience in registration, and general agreement in point of doctrine, had in practice, it would appear, induced the Dissenters, except the Quakers, almost constantly to resort to the church for marriage; and when the Marriage Act passed, none but Jews and Quakers complained. Conformity as to all other persons became compulsory by the operation of this act; and by law every one, be his opinions what they may, is now *pro hac vice* a member of the church, and is obliged to use a service which clearly contemplates church membership, and expressly points to a subsequent communion.

The state has certainly a right to interfere with marriage, (considered as an engagement involving the most important civil consequences,) by imposing previous restrictions, and regulating the circumstances attendant upon its celebration and record, with a view to such consequences; but it is obvious that compelling all persons to pass through the religious ordinances of the church, though *one way* of effecting the legitimate purpose of the state, is not only not the *only* way, but is not the best way, even supposing that conscience is to go for nothing in the account. But the state may further think it its duty to see that so important an obligation has, with a view to its effect on public morals, the sanction of a *religious* ceremony. On this head the state's interference is less easily justified; but if we concede the point, the necessity only becomes the more obvious of consulting the religious feeling of the parties, and of taking care that the ceremonial is one accordant with the opinions and devotional feeling of the party, and not in direct opposition to his known and openly avowed creed.

The government, therefore, as soon as a case was made out of a breach of religious freedom (arising from institutions adopted for reasons, whether of civil or religious policy, not maturely enough considered), ought to have hastened to its relief. If it saw fit to intrust the official duties respecting this important contract to parties having a religious bias different from that of many with whom they must come in contact, it should have required those who retained the office to do it in a suitable manner. We have seen, however, how this matter has been treated by some persons, and how common sense and liberal feeling have been set at nought, even in defiance of the most eminent men both in church and state, who have acknowledged the evil and done what they could to remedy it.

The House of Commons has three times passed bills for the relief of Unitarians. The House of Lords has several times decided by majorities in their favour; yet while the principle is conceded, it is thought in this country decorous and becoming to fetter the applicants with all the technical difficulties of devising a plan of removing an acknowledged evil, and to triumph, session after session, in contrivances for baffling the complainants, by playing off the prejudices of one set of men against those of another. What a specimen is this of the folly of combining civil institutions with the worship and religious opinions of one sect, the ministers of which turn round on the very government which employs them, and refuse either to do its work pro-

perly and without offence to the consciences of others, or to resign an office which their prejudices render them incompetent to discharge! Even in Catholic Austria, as the Bishop of Chester properly observed, there is far less bigotry on these points, the Catholic priests being obliged to register the marriages, baptisms, &c., of Protestants, on certificates sent them.

The *form* of the Marriage Register in the Established Church is far from perfect, particularly in its omission of the names of the parents of the marrying parties, which all registers should preserve.

It need not be added, that the marriage law leaves Jews and Quakers without any legal provision for the celebration and record of their marriages, or for the prevention of clandestine marriages; and that it does not even deign to state whether those marriages are valid. The legislature chooses to proceed on the absurd principle, that the use of the register would be a favour and premium on nonconformity. It ought rather to exercise greater vigilance to compel it, lest irregularities should take place, which the state should guard against for its own sake, not with any view to the merits or demerits of individuals.

As to Deaths.—The Parochial Register perhaps comprises a larger proportion of the deaths which take place than it does of the births. Few or no Dissenters are baptized at church, but many are buried there, because many Dissenting chapels have no burial-places. But in this respect, too, the register is very imperfect. The time of burial is only inferentially proof of the time or fact of death, and a record which contains (as the French system requires) a deposition of the actual fact and *time* of death (often of great importance) is infinitely preferable. We have, in order in some measure to supply our deficiencies, an officer called the Searcher, whose duty would properly combine with that of the Registrar; and both would connect themselves, under a well-regulated system, with the Coroner's interference when necessary.

The registers of births, marriages, and deaths, are, or ought to be, copied and sent periodically to the diocesans; but this duty is badly performed, and the returns thither are so kept as to be useless for all ordinary purposes.

The general result of our system is, that, even to the extent to which it goes, it is singularly rude and defective; and that (from its being founded on the ordinances of a church which half the population has, since the system began, deserted) it is radically and hopelessly partial and inefficient. It appears to us disgraceful that in a country like ours a common pedigree cannot be hunted out without the greatest difficulty; that a chasm must exist wherever heterodoxy has crept in; that the data for any accurate census, or for proper statistic returns of population, are wholly wanting; that even the defective returns of the neighbourhood of London, called the Bills of Mortality, are a compilation for which we are obliged to be indebted to so sapient a body as "THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF PARISH CLERKS." We hope none of our calculators of population venture to place reliance on such a return of births, for instance, as can be made up by the parish authorities, when perhaps half the children never come within orthodox observation at all.

The truth is, that this duty of registration will never be properly performed, until we can get fairly out of the dilemma, of either affronting the church by removing parts of its official duty, or of endeavouring to make it do its duty in a more catholic way. We want a municipal lay-officer having the conduct of this matter, independent of any religious preferences; and there are very many duties which such an officer could discharge, which are

now left to such people as churchwardens, overseers, constables, &c., for want of some person who should be to be found in or near every parish, and whose acts should have legal credit. The little use made in this country of notaries renders this still more desirable.

During the Commonwealth a most useful act was passed for establishing in every parish a Registrar, who should have the care of all the municipal records. We know that an alarm is always raised against the severance of the civil requisites of marriage from the religious ordinance. But there would be no necessity for any such dissociation; on the contrary, an easy means would be provided for reconciling the one with the other. The Registrar could attend at one form and place of worship as well as another, and there draw up and attest the civil results of what passes, as in fact the Notary does in many Catholic countries at marriages. The manner in which the system has worked in France shews that a perfect registration of actual births and deaths is readily obtained; and there is no necessity whatever (if it be thought undesirable) to make marriages dependent on the act of the municipal officer only, who is easily grafted upon such a religious ordinance as is likely to procure that sort of moral and devotional obligation which can alone make it useful for the state to interfere with that department at all.

ART. II—*Bible Controversy in Ireland. Infallibility not possible, Error not Culpable; with some notice of Transubstantiation; in Reply to Messrs. Pope and Macquire; in Letters to Irishmen in particular, and to Catholics and Protestants at large.* By the Author of "A Letter on the Immateriality of the Human Soul." London, Hunter. 1828. pp. 212. 8vo.

WE have read this very able treatise (the production, if we are not mistaken, of one who has been our correspondent) with almost unqualified approbation; and should it, as it ought, be studied by the various parties in the theological arena, we believe it will essentially serve the cause of genuine Reformation. The publication arises out of the celebrated discussions between the Romanist and the Protestant whose names occur in the title-page; but the careful, complete, and impartial manner in which our author has executed the work, should obtain for it a place among standard treatises on the Roman Catholic controversy, and cannot fail, we think, of meeting with high commendation from the clear-judging of all religious denominations.

The Prefatory Letter is addressed to the author's Roman Catholic countrymen; and we cannot do better than allow him to describe the impression made upon his mind by the recent discussions, of which he seems amply qualified to judge, and of the important consequences likely to result from them.

"We have all one object in common—the discovery or preservation of truth. And in proportion as truth is a blessing to mankind, it becomes a duty to hail as an auxiliary, and to welcome as a friend, on whichever side his conclusions may lie, one who, with sincerity and discretion, advances to our aid in this great pursuit. I believe the spirit of free inquiry to have been considerably awakened in Ireland. I am prone to hope that a new leaf has been opened in the destinies of her people; and without being an enthusiast,

I do believe that to Mr. Macguire belongs the merit of having achieved more effectually than centuries of written controversy could have previously done, one great and influential benefit; not only has he taught his countrymen, that Catholic and Protestant may meet in friendly debate, and that while each party, as yet unconvinced, may insist freely, and fully, and firmly, on the propriety of their respective opinions, it is possible for them to separate with mutual good feeling and regard; not only has he done this great good, but he has stimulated them TO TASK THEIR INTELLECTUAL POWERS; he has taught them to know that that acquiescence with which inherited opinions were hitherto received, must give way before the necessity of self-defence; that EXAMINATION is a duty from which Catholics can no longer either safely or honourably refrain, and is, in fact, itself indispensable to demonstrate that examination is not necessary at all. In a word, he has taught them to feel that, with whatever success either Catholic or Protestant may happen to encounter opinions at variance with his own, he is indebted for that success to more or less of study and inquiry; and Irishmen may at length discover, from the example of Mr. Macguire, and the free, and manly, and decorous spirit in which he bore his share in the late discussion, the gratifying truth, that religious disputation, in place of a barbarous struggle of BIGOTRY, may be ennobled into a more noble and generous struggle of MIND.

"Have I a right, in matters of religion, to form a conclusion by the exercise of my own reason? Such I conceive to be the simple question at issue; and let me add, I conceive too, the instant it is stated, the controversy may be said to expire. The very question involves a solecism; for how, let me ask, is it in the nature of things to come to any conclusion *without* the exercise of my own reason? Can I, in the most unlettered, or the most childish state of mind conceivable, be influenced to form an opinion without more or less of reasoning, be it ever so simple or so short, to conduct me to that opinion? Impossible; just as impossible as to think without thinking."

Such constitutes the burthen of our author's first argument against Infallibility, "from the impossibility of excluding private judgment."

Additional arguments are derived from the manifest opposition to *fact* involved in the interpretation of a distinguished text, by which this doctrine is usually defended; and from the admitted absence of that faculty in investigating the sense of those passages in general which are represented as teaching that doctrine.

The *Romanist* adduces the following words of our Lord, from the concluding verses of St. Matthew's Gospel; "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth; go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in [rather *into*] the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo! I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." Upon which he offers the following comment: "Christ here declares that the *same* power given to him by the Father, he communicates to his apostles *without limitation*, moral or personal," &c. Our author asks,

"Where does he [Christ] declare this? Not here assuredly, for there is nothing like it. I apprehend the Spirit was given without measure to Christ; but I am not so sure it was given in the same measure to the apostles; if it were, how came it to pass that they mistook the very terms of their commission, and that in the tenth and eleventh chapters of the Acts, we find Peter and the other apostles represented as only then, by an additional revelation, discovering that "*all nations*," including the Gentiles, were to be comprehended in the gospel scheme? Again, how came it that, notwithstanding all their supernatural gifts, Paul and Peter, as detailed in the second chapter of Galatians, came to open rupture, Paul withstanding the latter to the face,

and declaring that he was to be blamed, because he dissembled, and walked not uprightly, "*agreeably to the truth of the gospel*"? That a sufficient power was given them to propagate the substantial tidings of the gospel, repentance and remission of sins, there cannot be a doubt; but that all the power, all the wisdom, and all the knowledge of Christ, were transferred into the apostles, there is not in this passage one atom of evidence; while in others there are directly contrary intimations."

Now if, as our author successfully shews, the Romanist is wrong as to the *extent* of the power promised to the disciples, there can be less necessity for going into the question how long that power was to endure. The history of the alleged miracles of modern times might safely be left to settle that part of the subject, (as far as the Romanist is concerned,) without any critical discussion of the meaning of texts. But we remark, that our author has inadvertently forgotten to support by evidence his expressed doubt, whether the words of Christ do contemplate the succeeding ages of the church. After having reversed the primary inference, he might, we think, have admitted readily, what we cannot but deem the natural and just interpretation, though some few critics have called it into question, that ἡ συντελεία τοῦ αἰῶνος, *the end of the world*, as it is translated in our Common Version, is coincident with the close of the Christian dispensation; *the end*, in the Apostle's phrase, 1 Cor. xv. 24, which sense best suits the connexion in Matt. xiii. 39, 40. A very good note in defence of this interpretation will be found in the learned commentary of the Unitarian Woltzogenius, Matt. xxviii. 20.

We next find our author (p. 39) introducing the remark of Cyprian on the words of Christ, Matt. xvi. 18, &c., "I say unto thee, thou art Peter," &c.

"'He that does not hold this unity of the church, can he think that he holds the faith?' But the same Cyprian also remarks, 'Christ says to his APOSTLES, and through them to all his ministers, he that heareth you, heareth me,' &c. By what conceivable stratagem, then, does it come to pass, that the authority, whatever it was, which appears, by the admission of Cyprian himself, to have been *equally conferred upon ALL the apostles*, and through them, upon their respective successors wherever dispersed, is made to centre in the Bishop of Rome, as the successor of *one only* of these apostles? And see John xxii. 22, 23; Eph. ii. 20; Rev. xxi. 14."

We are amused with the extract from Dr. Doyle's Pastoral Letter, 28th of August, 1825, which occupies part of the note p. 60, and which consists ill with the noble efforts of the Catholic disputants.

"It is the worst of heresy, and a virtual apostacy from the Christian religion, to assert that the gates of hell have ever prevailed against this church, (against the *Christian* church they never will,) that is, that the pastors and people who compose it, have ever, at any period, even for a single hour, professed error! You, therefore, cannot enter into a disputation, which would seem to imply that the opposite of what is here stated *is even remotely possible!*"

Our author justly remarks,

"All this is vastly fine, but is it *wise* of Bishop Doyle? I grant, indeed, that by entering into discussion, my firm opinion is, his cause must eventually be lost; but by declining it altogether, is he not undone without a blow? He who resolves to fight, if victory is impossible, may at least reap applause for his courage: but to him who will not fight at all, the *scorn* of his rival and of mankind must be the bitterest ingredient of defeat! Abstracted from

political considerations, the most passive population upon earth could not *always* remain attached to a system which had nothing but silence to oppose to its enemies. After all, Bishop Doyle feels this, for he often writes."

Letter IV. contains the argument against infallibility from the fluctuating state of opinion in succeeding ages of the church.

" ' Could Christ himself,' says the Romanist, ' have left hundreds of millions of men for nine hundred years in error?' And almost his last words in the discussion were, ' How could a church have thus subsisted for eighteen centuries, if error had formed its corner-stone and foundation? Have we ever read or heard of any system, either in politics or religion, lasting for such a period of time, unless it was founded upon the best principles?'"

We extract only one part of the reply which our author makes :

" Yes, my countrymen ! I could tell Mr. Macguire that we have both read and heard of a Paganism which has subsisted for a period of double that duration ; and we doubt not, if there were any of the followers of the Indian Vishnu, whose latest incarnation Sir William Jones, upon a moderate calculation, places two thousand seven hundred and ninety-nine years ago, within reach of Mr. Macguire's speculations, they would be zealous to testify their sense of this magnanimous vindication of their faith ! Nay, were it not that the religion of *the Prophet* has only endured for two-thirds of the period of time assigned by Mr. Macguire as the mark of divinity, (and yet ' Christ has left' Mahometans ' in error,' many of them apostates from his own church, for longer than the time specified in his first calculation,) added to the circumstance that they have at present too much to think of in that quarter, we might have thought of transmitting, by the first courier, to Constantinople, a recommendation of our ingenious countryman to the grand Mufti at the Porte ; the high priest of a religion which has flourished unreformed and unaltered for a space of one thousand two hundred years !"

Letter V. contains the argument against Infallibility from the character of the medium through which it is supposed to have been transmitted. And this is a melancholy page ; clear indeed in the demonstration which it yields, but too deplorable to permit us to transcribe. With unfeigned reverence for many of those who have firmly adhered, and who still firmly adhere, to the Catholic communion, and with unexceeded earnestness for the restoration of their civil rights, we cannot for a moment refer to any higher source than the most inveterate prejudice, an unshaken belief in the immaculate purity of a church, so many of whose members—not that it is singular in this respect—have been grossly corrupt and shockingly immoral. And as for *infallibility*, we think with our author, " that is the veriest shadow, the most immoderate fiction, that was ever set up to amuse or astound the human imagination." P. 53.

Having accompanied our author in the arguments by which he so successfully repels the doctrine of the Romanist, we are now to witness his impartiality in his remonstrance upon the Protestant advocate's surrender of the Protestant cause, and upon his great temerity and unchristian zeal in charging Almighty God with entertaining wrath against the conscientious errors of private judgment.

" Almost in the opening of the debate, and touching the most precious of the points for which a Protestant can lift his voice—the right of private judgment—the baffled ear, impatient for the mingled sounds of eloquence and wisdom, found nothing to report but the imbecilities of a school-boy, or the bigotry of a dominican !" —P. 173.

We appreciate the sentiment, and admire the spirit of the following :

"The '*real Protestant*,' my countrymen, is he who, rejecting all authority, whether written or unwritten, Catholic or Reformed, Established or Sectarian, consents to be bound only by the canonical Scriptures of God; for his particular interpretation of which, by the conscientious exertion of his means and capacity, he is answerable *to that God alone*. Whatever, therefore, his conclusions may be as to the contents of the Sacred Volume, so long as he fairly exerts his judgment upon them, and of that fairness none but the Searcher of hearts can have competent knowledge, he ceases neither to be a Christian nor a Protestant. This Fox, our Martyrologist, avowed when, refusing to sign articles or canons, he drew a New Testament from his pocket, desiring to sign that if they would let him. This Bishop Jewell declared, when he said in his Apology, that '*in the Scripture only could the mind of men acquiesce*.' This Chillingworth contended for, when he nobly professed that '*by the religion of Protestants he did not understand the doctrine of Luther, or Calvin, or Melancthon; nor the confession of Augusta, or Geneva, nor the catechism of Heidelberg, nor the Articles of the Church of England—no, nor the harmony of Protestant confessions; but that wherein they all agree, and which they all subscribe with a greater harmony as a perfect rule of their faith and actions, that is, the Bible. The Bible, I say, the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants.*'—P. 185.

We find our author (p. 188, note) alluding to the Reformation Society recently organized in Dublin, to which we are indebted for the origin of Dr. Drummond's letters to Lord Mountcashel.

"The stipulation of that society, that *none who deny the doctrine of the Trinity* shall be permitted to unite in its purpose of encouraging our Roman Catholic countrymen to more liberal and Christian views of our common religion, must not only have met his [Mr. Pope's] concurrence, but has, in all probability, been considerably owing to his horrific declarations respecting that doctrine. A society so organized, deserves to want success; and it will assuredly '*have its reward*.'"

We have had occasion to notice that in a similar society, in the county of Kent, the same stipulation is put in force. But whatever the cunning inventors of such stipulations may imagine, we believe that the discerning bystanders cannot fail of reading, and being instructed by the language which they convey.

From the inconsistency, and we are sorry to say the intolerance, of the Protestant advocate, we turn to the refreshing observations of our author near the conclusion of his volume.

"If ever, therefore, there was a mind which, undismayed by danger, un-seduced by interest, and strong in the possession of conscious purity, sought for truth at the throne of the Divinity, that mind was *Milton's*. And yet Milton and Mr. Pope [the Protestant advocate] have come to opposite conclusions on the doctrine of the *Trinity*! and not only so, but the reception which has been given to certain texts which are generally relied upon in support of that doctrine, has been characterized by him as no better than immoderate credulity. Dr. Sumner, whose integrity and independent spirit in giving this work an English dress, are entitled to every praise, has been pleased to apologize for Milton's errors upon the doctrine of the Trinity from his having written before the age of Waterland! And yet—*quot homines tot sententiæ*—Bishop Warburton was of opinion, that the only thing which this learned Doctor, in the course of his controversial labours, had established beyond dispute, was *his own dulness*!"

We think our author might have assigned a higher place to Locke, than that of dividing the honours of a note with Archbishop Magee. Let it not

be supposed that we attach an undue importance to the opinions of the illustrious trio, Milton, Newton, and Locke. We are not disposed to say, "We would err with them;" but we think their concurrence in an affair of judgment no mean corroboration of the conclusions to which, from proper sources, we have arrived; and while patiently, and we hope devoutly, searching for Christian truth, we feel an internal consciousness—but far be it from us to employ the language of bitterness or intolerance in asserting—that we are in the right.

Such works as the interesting volume of which we with reluctance take our leave, are calculated to advance the interests of Christ's kingdom, and the line here pursued is precisely that which, by the Divine blessing, will lead to catholic, evangelical, saving faith. Most sincerely, therefore, do we join with our author in the wish, that his volume

"— may enjoy an encouraging reception; that it may be permitted to take a station in the number of those pioneers in the road to improvement, which from time to time are opening the way for that more visible and striking change which may one day ensue, when a more auspicious policy shall have composed his unhappy land, and the disencumbered minds of men, expanding with their acquired liberties, and catching the progressive impulse of the times, shall turn with wonder from the political to the spiritual and mental evils under which they have been similarly languishing!"

ART. III.—*Four Discourses on the Sacrifice and Priesthood of Jesus Christ, and on Atonement and Redemption.* By John Pye Smith, D. D. London. 1828.

(Continued from p. 480.)

DR. SMITH, like many other modern and moderate Calvinists, as they are termed, is evidently dissatisfied with the common representations of the Atonement; but what his own peculiar notion of it is, it is not so easy to determine. Much of his reasoning and many of his distinctions are exceedingly subtle and fine-spun. Thus, having asserted in the former edition of his work that Jesus Christ voluntarily sustained the guilt and punishment of sin, he now tells us that he has omitted the word guilt, on account of the misconstruction to which it was liable, though it might have been retained, understanding it in the sense in which he used it, as denoting legal answerableness, (*reatus*,) and not blameworthiness (*culpa*). We deny the justness of the position altogether. We reprobate it as most false and unscriptural. But we just notice it here to shew the subtle and scholastic distinctions which Dr. Smith sometimes introduces, and which, we are quite sure, the Scripture-writers never thought of. From the want of simplicity and clearness in his views and reasonings, we can only state generally what we conceive his opinions on the Atonement to be. With Grotius, Stillingfleet, and others, he seems to consider that God, upon the breach of his laws, was in a manner bound to vindicate their authority,—to vindicate his justice and his honour by the infliction of punishment, if not upon the offender himself, yet upon Christ, who in this instance becomes his substitute, and thereby expiates his sins. From the ancient sacrifices Dr. Smith infers, "that the essential righteousness of Jehovah rendered it necessary and inevitable that sin should be punished—that the sinner is totally unable

by any powers or resources of his own to escape the punishment due to his offence—and that though God is full of mercy and willing to pardon, yet that the way of pardon is through the substitution and sufferings of a piacular victim.” Dr. Smith further says, “Jesus Christ, by the sacrifice of himself, voluntarily sustained that suffering which was the marked punishment of sin,—and that the tremendous manifestations of God’s displeasure against sin he endured, though in him was no sin, and endured them in a manner of which even those unhappy spirits who shall drink the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God will never be able to form an adequate idea.” These passages certainly do not go the length of asserting that Jesus Christ died to appease the wrath of God, to render him propitious, or to reconcile him to his offending creature, man; but they contain propositions equally objectionable, and to which are strongly opposed the dictates of reason, and the feelings of nature, and the voice of Scripture. It would require a volume to enter into a full refutation of all that Dr. Smith has said in behalf of these statements. Referring our readers, therefore, to Dr. Sykes’s work on Redemption, for a rational and satisfactory explanation of the various passages of Scripture to which appeal is made, we shall proceed briefly to assign our reasons for utterly rejecting the positions above laid down, and for denouncing them, which we do unequivocally and unhesitatingly, as false and unreasonable, inconsistent with the perfections and character of God, repugnant to the heart of man, and contrary to the authority of the written word.

In the first place, then, we deny “that the essential righteousness of Jehovah renders it necessary that all sin should be punished;” if by punishment be meant the full infliction of the threatened penalty upon every instance of disobedience and transgression. In one sense, no doubt, all sin, even that which is repented of and forsaken, is punished, viz. by the consequences which it naturally entails—by the sorrow and remorse of which it is always more or less the occasion; but that all sin must be punished in the way in which we commonly understand the word, by the continued loss of the approbation and favour of God, is contrary to the express declarations of Scripture, God having promised that he who truly repented of his sins, should be spared the penalty annexed to their commission. In the very same breath, if we may venture upon such an expression, in which God declares “the soul that sinneth it shall die;” he likewise promises, “that if the wicked will turn from the wickedness that he hath committed, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die.” It is argued, nevertheless, that the justice of God requires that the threatened punishment of disobedience and transgression should be strictly enforced, if not against the person of the offender himself, yet against Jesus Christ, the substitute provided for him. Now, this appears to us to be one of the most monstrous propositions ever advanced by presumptuous man, and affords of itself a sufficient reason for rejecting that doctrine which needs to be supported by such reasoning. Justice requires that we should give to every man his *due*, but justice *does not* require that we should exact from every one what is due to us. It compels us to pay to others, if demanded, the debt that may be owing to *them*, but it does not compel us to take from others the debt that may be owing to *us*. And when we proceed to apply the word *justice* to any part of the Divine proceedings, we have no right to give it a meaning inconsistent with its common usage, and at variance also with the general perfections and character of God.

When it is alleged that God must punish a sinner because his justice

demands it, we ask, Why? Why is God required, for the sake of his justice, to exact from his creatures what he has the right of exacting? This is not accordant with the notions of justice as entertained among men, there being no kind or degree of injustice in any one's foregoing a claim which he might legally have enforced. But this notion of justice is not only opposed to the common understanding of the word, but it would render the Divine attributes of a jarring and contradictory character; it would make the justice of God inconsistent with his mercy. The act of mercy is the remission of punishment, the relinquishment of a debt, the forgiveness of the sinner, the pardon of the guilty. And if it be contended that the justice of God requires that, without the offer of an equivalent, the guilty should not be pardoned,—that the sinner should not be forgiven,—that punishment should not be remitted, it is in effect to say, that God is not merciful, that mercy is no essential part of his nature, is no necessary element in the composition of his character. But so to speak of the justice of God, so to define it as to lead to such absurd and frightful consequences as these, is a manifest proof that we know not what we say, or that what we say is palpably and grossly erroneous. However convenient it may be to the imperfection of our minds to speak of God's justice, and truth, and mercy, as distinct attributes, they must all, like the different voices of a chorus, flow harmoniously into one. Benevolence is the great general principle into which the moral perfections of God may be resolved. This is the fountain of them all, and they are to be regarded as so many rays of light streaming in different directions from the same Mighty Orb. Justice is goodness flowing in one direction; mercy is goodness moving in another; and faithfulness is goodness in another still. In God it is just to be merciful, and it is merciful to be just. His perfections do not jar, and strike one upon another, but go their eternal rounds in perfect concord and delightful harmony. With us it may be otherwise. With beings imperfect in their apprehensions, and narrow in their views, and confined in the range of their knowledge, and liable to be, at all times, imposed upon by artifice and cunning, the one *may* and *does* frequently clash with the other. Their interests will be conflicting, and in the conflict a sacrifice must sometimes be made of the one or of the other; but with the all-perfect and all-knowing God, who sees all things from the beginning to the end, with all their relations and dependencies, they uniformly go together. To him the claims of justice can never be inconsistent with the claims of mercy. What then becomes of the boasted argument in favour of the Atonement which is derived from the justice of God? In the first place, **IT IS FALSE IN POINT OF FACT: God HAS pardoned the guilty upon their repentance and amendment**, as appears from many instances recorded in Scripture. In the second place, it is false as it respects the Divine declarations and promises. “I, even I, am he, saith the Lord, that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.” “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.” And to make a plain thing still plainer, let us attend to what Isaiah says in another place. “Put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well;—and though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” The justice of God then—we say it confidently, because we say it under the express authority and sanction of his own word—the justice of God does not require punishment for the

sin that is repented of and forsaken. His language to the offender is, Turn unto me, and I will turn unto you. What the justice of God really requires is, that he should act towards his creatures in consistency with the character under which he has been pleased to reveal himself. And what is the character under which he has been pleased to reveal himself? It is this: "The Lord passed by Moses and proclaimed himself. The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin." To say after this, that the justice of God requires that every sin, though repented of and forsaken, should entail upon it the punishment originally denounced against it, is to set up the fictions of our own imagination in opposition to the positive assertions of the divine word.

It is very true, that in civil society an offender against the laws is punished without any inquiry being made about his repentance. And the reason of this is sufficiently obvious. Limited as are our faculties, and circumscribed as is our knowledge, it is quite impossible for us at any time to say that such a repentance is genuine and sincere; and, therefore, with us punishment must take its course. But this reason does not, in the slightest degree, apply to the Divine Being. He can remit the punishment; he can forgive the offender, without injury to his laws, because he knows, certainly and unerringly, when to forgive and whom to forgive. He is not to be imposed upon by false representations. He is not to be deceived by outward appearances. He looketh at the heart, and he knoweth when the heart is right. To deny to the Divine Being the power of forgiving sins upon repentance, or, which is the same thing, to say that such an act is inconsistent with his justice, is to rob him of the brightest jewel in the crown of his glory. That doctrine, therefore, must be false, and that reasoning must be bad, which would place in direct opposition and contrariety to each other, the justice and the mercy of God. To forgive a debt, to remit a punishment, is an act of mercy; and to him who knows always and with certainty what debt to forgive, and what punishment to remit, what and when is the proper time and occasion for exercising this disposition,—to such a being the act of forgiveness can never be opposed to the demands of justice; in other words, these two attributes of the Divine Being will always concur and harmonize with each other.

The general reasoning in favour of the common doctrine of the Atonement is also founded on erroneous conceptions of the nature and design of punishment. Punishment was not ordained for its own sake, or for any vindictive purpose, but for the furtherance of the ends of truth and righteousness. And whenever the cause of righteousness can be more effectually promoted by the exercise of forbearance and forgiveness, than by the infliction of punishment, the laws of God, so far from requiring punishment, are best honoured and vindicated by the exercise of forgiveness. The object of punishment is the promotion of the general good, combined with the reformation of the individual offender. For the reasons just stated, it is not always possible, under human governments, to connect these two purposes together; but under the government of God there is nothing to prevent their most perfect and entire combination. With God, fully acquainted as He is with the thoughts and purposes of the human heart, if the sinner truly repent of his sins, and do works meet for repentance, the end of punishment is obtained, and the necessity of its positive infliction is done away with. But punishment, it is repeated, must be inflicted in vindication of the authority of God's laws. But God's laws are best and most worthily

vindicated when they are obeyed, when the necessity of obedience is felt and acknowledged, when the desire of obedience springs up vigorously in the soul, and puts all its energies and efforts into active requisition. And repentance being a sign and a characteristic of this conversion of the heart to God, of the existence of an earnest desire in the inward man to change his old ways and habits, and to mould them into greater conformity with the Divine will, is of itself no mean homage to the authority of God's laws, and no slight vindication of their excellence and value. But if, by a vindication of God's laws, it is meant that the breach of them must, under all circumstances, be followed by the threatened punishment, it is the same as to say, that the sin of men, though repented of and forsaken, cannot be forgiven, because the execution of the threatened punishment is not forgiveness; and if this punishment be insisted upon, forgiveness there is none. To vindicate the honour of God's laws, by denying to him the propriety of bestowing forgiveness, of exercising mercy, is not to justify the ways of God to man; it is to asperse the Divine character, to dishonour the Divine perfections, and to perplex and confound the moral notions of men. The moral law of God is vindicated, and can be vindicated only, by insisting upon the absolute necessity of repentance and reformation before the sinner can be restored to the hope of the Divine favour and acceptance. Repentance and reformation open the only door to a consistent exercise of the mercy of God. This is the only way to reconcile his holiness and his justice with his goodness and his mercy.

If it should be said (and Dr. Smith intimates something like it), that, under the old dispensation, repentance and reformation possessed the virtue and efficacy which we have now attributed to them, in consequence of the sacrifices which were then performed, and of the value which they derived from being typical of the great sacrifice to be offered up by Christ, our answer is, that there is not the smallest ground for such a supposition; because, in the first place, sacrifices are uniformly declared to be nothing in comparison with moral actions; secondly, because there is no proof that the Mosaic sacrifices *were* typical of the sacrifice of Christ; and, thirdly and principally, *because no sacrifices were ever required or offered up for the greatest moral offences*; and yet for the greatest moral offences, repentance and reformation were declared to be the proper and only, but still *sufficient*, means of procuring the Divine forgiveness, of bringing man within the pale of the Divine mercy. And not only is this stated in the form of a general proposition or declaration, but it is upon this ground *specifically* and *precisely*, that David and others express their hope of obtaining pardon from God, of being favoured with the visitations of the Divine mercy. It is as clear as noon-day that, under the old dispensation, the greatest offenders of the moral laws of God petitioned for forgiveness, looked for pardon, hoped for favour and acceptance on the consideration of the Divine goodness and mercy alone, combined with their own contrite and penitent spirits. And if Moses and the prophets announced the Creator as the God that pardoneth iniquity, and retaineth not his anger for ever, Christ has revealed him to us as our heavenly Father, kind even to the unthankful and the evil, willing to forgive us our trespasses, if we are merciful and forgiving to our fellow-creatures, and conferring upon us, of his own free-will, the gift of everlasting life. If Christ is said to be the propitiation for our sins, if he is the means by which we are recovered and reconciled to God, are brought into a state of privilege, of friendship, and communion with him, (which is the real meaning of the word rendered propitiation or atonement,) this

propitiation, atonement, or reconciliation is attributed to the love of God. It was because he loved us, as the Apostle John declares, that he sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins, to be the means and instrument of delivering us from our wretched bondage, and of restoring us to the freedom and happiness of the children of God.

Why should it be a matter of wonder that the apostles, themselves Jews, brought up in the faith and profession of the Jewish religion, with all their most sacred associations founded on Jewish institutions and cemented by Jewish phraseology—why should it be at all wonderful that, in speaking of the doctrines of the gospel, and in referring to the great facts of the Christian history, they should throw over them a Jewish dress, and exhibit them, especially when addressing Jews, in something of a Jewish form and attitude? The deliverance of the Israelites from the land of Egypt, their rescue from the miserable bondage in which they had been long held, it was the habit of the Jews to characterize by the term redemption; and what could be more natural than that the apostles, Jews, and speaking to Jews, should make use of this term in designating the moral and spiritual deliverance effected by Christ? What, again, could be more natural than that the term propitiation or atonement, having been employed to express the means or instruments by which men were formerly brought into a state of outward privilege and communion with God, should be applied to the labours, sufferings, and death of Christ, by which mankind are brought into a state of far greater privilege, possessing far nobler promises, and opening into far more glorious possessions than ever appertained to the Jews? How natural also was it that the apostles, having been accustomed to call by the word sacrifice every laborious effort, every suffering exertion, every act of self-denial in behalf and furtherance of truth and righteousness, should apply it to the death of Christ, that noblest effort to advance the cause of truth and virtue, that most complete and perfect act of obedience, that most precious and entire submission of the whole mind and heart to the will and service of God? And to a Jew, what could be more natural and agreeable than the figure, that, as the high-priest under the old dispensation was accustomed to enter into the tabernacle with the blood of bulls, Christ, as the high-priest of the new dispensation, entered into the tabernacle, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, with his own blood? What is there in these allusions and comparisons to excite our surprise, or to make us look about for a meaning which is inconsistent with the acknowledged perfections of God and the plain, general language of Scripture?

On the supposition that the common doctrine of the Atonement is really a doctrine of the gospel, it is most extraordinary that Christ, when he treats expressly and explicitly, as he sometimes does, on the conditions of our future acceptance,—on the means of recommending ourselves to the favour and blessing of God, not only makes no allusion to this supposed essential doctrine of the gospel,—not only omits to say one word about what we are now so often told is the one and all-important article, but positively inculcates doctrines, and lays down terms and conditions of our future salvation, which not only have no reference to the supposed atonement, but are manifestly inconsistent with it, and utterly subversive of it. When he states the way and manner of a sinner's return to God, how he may regain the paths from which he has wandered, and be restored to the privileges and enjoyments which he had forfeited—by what means he could be brought back to his father's home, and receive again the blessing of a father's love, he points, for this purpose, to the paths of contrition and repentance, making

no mention whatever of the atoning efficacy of his blood. It is to the mercy of our heavenly Father that we are taught to look—on *that* we are directed to place our reliance, on the universality of his love, and the tenderness of his compassion; and, as the only thing needful on our parts, to possess this confidence, to feel this reliance, to enjoy this assurance, we must go into the paths of penitence and walk in the ways of righteousness. Let this be done, steadily and perseveringly, and under the guidance of infinite wisdom, and the protection of infinite mercy, we shall at last be brought to our destined habitation, to our final resting-place, to our heavenly and eternal home.*

ART. IV.—*A Connexion of Sacred and Profane History from the Death of Joshua to the Decline of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah, intended to complete the Works of Shuckford and Prideaux.* By the Rev. M. Russell, LL. D., Episcopal Minister, Leith.

IF we consider the Bible merely as the most ancient historical work extant, as recording the original laws and institutions of a peculiar people, separated from the rest of the world by the singularity of their religious observances, every thing that can elucidate the interesting narratives which we find there, and throw any light upon early customs, manners, and ceremonies, must be interesting to those who love to trace the progress of society through all its varieties. If we regard the Sacred Volume in a higher point of view, as containing not only the history of a single nation, but as recording the dispensations of Providence in the preservation of a simple, pure, and sacred system of religious belief, we must contemplate with attention, respect, and gratitude, the labours which learning, talents, and industry, employ in endeavouring to make the narrative more clear to the human understanding, to remove obscurity, or to place truth in a more conspicuous light.

Previous to the appearance of Dr. Russell's book, two works of very great value were devoted to the purpose of connecting the history of the Jews with that of the rest of the world, or perhaps we should say, to shew the connexion of sacred and profane history. The invaluable work of the learned Prideaux, which has indeed enjoyed a just, lasting, and extensive popularity, was intended to fill up, with materials collected from ancient authors, the interval between that period at which the narrative contained in the canonical Jewish Scriptures ceases, and that at which the history of the New Testament commences. Dr. Shuckford afterwards, in the "*Sacred and Profane History of the World, connected from the Creation of the World to the Death of Sardanapalus, &c.,*" attempted to illustrate the annals of the Hebrew people by a reference to the condition of the neighbouring nations. He intended to continue his narrative to the epoch at which Prideaux commences his work, but did not live to complete his plan: his work proceeds no farther than the time of Joshua. The book before us comprehends the times of the Judges, and terminates with the commencement of the regal government and the death of Samuel. The author an-

* The Reviewer requests the reader to correct an error of the press in the preceding article on this subject, p. 480, line 28, where the words "*fire flame,*" should be "*fine flour.*"

nounces his intention to continue his narrative to the point of time at which Prideaux commences his inquiries.

The uncertainty of chronology in most historical writings of early times forms one of the principal difficulties in reconciling the accounts given by different authors. In the Old Testament, where the only standard by which the progress of time is marked is the duration of life, or the length of a generation, the difficulty becomes almost insurmountable. Science has laboured to remove the obscurity, but so uncertain are the data on which her reasonings can proceed, that a difference is to be found in the various computations of time, from the creation to the deluge, of not less than seven hundred years, and of eight hundred from the deluge to the death of Abraham. Nothing is more dry and uninteresting in general than chronological details, because they are for the most part inconclusive and unsatisfactory; Dr. Russell has, however, considered the subject, in his preliminary dissertation, with great clearness and perspicuity, and thrown into it all the interest of which such a subject can admit.

It is a fact well known, that there is a very great and remarkable difference between the chronology of the Hebrew Scriptures and that of the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Septuagint Version, and the works of Josephus. This difference did not always exist, nor, in our author's opinion, did it originate in the ignorance or carelessness of transcribers, but was regularly planned and effected to serve an important purpose. The difference is exhibited in a table of the various statements contained in the Hebrew, the Samaritan, and the Septuagint Scriptures, together with the statement of Josephus respecting the whole duration of life of the antediluvian patriarchs, and the time that each lived before the birth of his eldest son—

“ In which it is to be observed, that between Josephus and the Septuagint the difference is only six years, while both of these differ from the modern Hebrew Bible not less than six hundred. The cause of this remarkable difference, or rather, perhaps, the manner in which it was effected, may be discovered in the principle according to which the Jews constructed their chronological tables. They measured the several æras of their ancient history, not by adding together the full lives of their successive patriarchs, but by taking the sum of their generations, that is the age which they had respectively attained at the birth of their eldest sons; for example, the generation of Enos, or his age at the birth of Cainan, is estimated by the Hebrew and Samaritan texts as having extended to ninety years—the residue of his life, according to the same authorities, is eight hundred and fifteen years, and the total length of life, being the amount of both these sums, is nine hundred and five years: whereas, in the Septuagint and Josephus, the generation is enlarged to one hundred and ninety years, the residue of life is diminished to seven hundred and fifteen years, while the full length of life, or nine hundred and five years, is, of course, the same in all these ancient records.”

From the deluge to the birth of Abraham the length of time is varied on the same principle, and extended in the Septuagint by the insertion of a second Cainan, to whose generation one hundred and thirty years have been assigned; by these means, while in the Septuagint this period appears to have been 1072 years, in Josephus nine hundred and ninety-three, in the Hebrew text it is diminished to two hundred and ninety-two years. From Abraham to the departure of his descendants from Egypt, the account of time is not so dark or obscure, but from that event to the building of the temple there is a greater intricacy; some chronologers making the time seven hundred and forty-one years, while, from the Hebrew text it appears to have been four hundred and eighty. Thus the whole deviation of time,

from the creation to the birth of Christ, is supposed, by Jackson, to be 5426 years, by Hales, 5411, both following the authority of the Septuagint and Josephus, and maintaining that the modern Hebrew text has been greatly vitiated, which makes the same period 4004 years.

This difference between the Septuagint and the Hebrew Scriptures did not always exist. Dr. Russell argues,

“First, on general grounds, it is to be presumed that in all cases the version shall agree with the original in regard at least to the important matters of fact and date, and that, in every instance where there is no deficiency on the part of the translators in point of knowledge or of fidelity, the former shall present a correct view of the events recorded in the latter, embodying all the circumstances of time, place, and persons, with which the narrative was at first accompanied. The nicer shades of distinction which belong to the idioms of language may indeed be lost in the process of translation from one tongue to another; vigour of conception, as well as propriety and beauty in the delineation of thought, may escape amid the mechanical efforts of a mere linguist to find out suitable terms and corresponding phrases; but there is not, within the range of casualties incident to this species of literary labour, any reason to apprehend an inaccurate version of such palpable things as numerical lists, genealogies, and records.”

Philo and Josephus both assure us that the Greek version was made with the utmost exactness, and obtained a remarkable reputation for exactness among the learned Jews. Josephus, according to his own statement, compiled his *Antiquities* from the Hebrew originals. He was a complete master of the Hebrew tongue, and his numbers coincide with those of the Septuagint. Demetrius and Eupolemus, both of whom wrote histories of the Jewish kings, and who of course made use of the Septuagint, accord exactly with Josephus.

“Such a coincidence,” Dr. Russell observes, “could not be accidental. In no particular are authors of the best faith and the greatest industry found so frequently to differ as in the minute details of chronology. When, therefore, we find that three historians, who wrote on the same subject, at times and places considerably removed from each other, and who derived their materials from different sources, two of them from the Septuagint, and the third from the Hebrew original, and who yet agree not only in the substance of the events and occurrences which they narrate, but even in the order, succession, relative distance, and chronological position, and more especially in the length of the gross period which these events occupied, from the commencement to the very end of the series,—are we not under a moral necessity to conclude, that in regard at least to the principal facts and dates contained in the archives to which they had recourse, the original and the version must have been entirely the same?”

Previous to the second century of the Christian æra no traces are to be found of any difference supposed to exist between the Greek and Hebrew sacred books. During the unsettled state of the Jews after their expulsion from their own country, all the Hebrew copies of the Bible which escaped destruction remained in the hands of the Jews, of whom a few only retained any knowledge of the language of Moses and the ancient prophets. The Septuagint was not only in the possession of the learned Jews, and read in their synagogues in various parts, but it was also in the hands of Christians in every part of the empire. This materially diminished the chance of corruption in the Greek Scriptures, and rendered any general corruption almost impossible, while it was perfectly easy to practise the arts of interpolation or alteration in the Hebrew.

At the end of the first century, the Jews, alarmed at the general progress of Christianity, regretted that the Greek version had ever been made, because from that the Christians derived their strongest arguments. It is said that the rabbis instituted an annual fast to curse the day in which the Septuagint was completed. No wonder, then, if they attempted a corruption of the original records in order to depreciate the value of the translation. Why this corruption should be attempted principally in the dates, seems to be accounted for thus: "An early tradition prevailed among several nations of antiquity, which we believe may be traced to the mysticism of Jewish interpretation, that the world in its present form was to last only 6000 years." A belief in this singular notion is to be found in the writings of Heathens, Jews, and Christians. Absurd and groundless as this opinion is, it never could have arisen from the Hebrew Scriptures as they now stand, though possibly it might from the Septuagint. Expecting the Messiah to appear in the latter ages of the world, or during the sixth millenium, and finding that Christ, according to the computation of time in the Septuagint, did in fact come at that period, the Jews, on the assertion of Abulfuragius, altered the chronology of their Bible, and so made it appear that the time when Jesus lived and taught was only in the middle of that period allotted for the duration of the world, and therefore could not be the expected Messiah.

We shall not dwell on the various arguments by which our author supports his position; they are founded on very diligent research, and stated with great clearness and precision. On the whole, they appear to us to justify him in the conclusion, that the chronology of the Septuagint and Josephus is to be preferred to that of the Hebrew. He then proceeds to define the limits of that particular period which is the subject of his book, the interval which elapsed between the exode from Egypt and the building of Solomon's Temple. The period of four hundred and eighty years, which stands in the Hebrew text of 1 Kings vi. 1, our author considers a forgery, introduced by the Mazoretic Jews; for Josephus refers to the passage in which it is inserted, and yet extends the period to five hundred and ninety-two years. Origen cites the text, but takes no notice of the numbers. It is, therefore, concluded that the time was not specified in the copy used by him. The period is fixed by our author, on the authority of the Septuagint and Josephus, at five hundred and ninety-two years, and the absurdities are pointed out which result from the mode of estimating the time adopted by Usher, Petavius, &c., by which "Samuel is made a judge at thirteen, was an old grey-headed man and had sons fit to assist him in his office before he was twenty-three, and finally died at an advanced age, about the time he completed his fiftieth year."

It is an easier task to compute the time from the building of the temple to the captivity of Judah and the demolition of the Jewish capital. Josephus has fallen into an error, adding forty years to the reign of Solomon. An allowance being made on this account, the true period will be 430 years, which makes the whole extent of time from the creation of the world to the birth of Christ 5441 years. According to the system of chronology established by our author, the narrative contained in his work begins in the 3898th from the creation of the world, and the 1543rd before the nativity of Christ, being the year immediately succeeding the death of Joshua.

"Relying on the chronology introduced by the Rabbis, Dr. Shuckford fixed the death of Joshua in the year of the world 2578, being, according to the same scheme, the 1426th before the epoch of Christian redemption. The difference between the two systems of computation in the period from Adam

to the nativity, is not less than 1437 years, the greater part of which is to be found in the ages prior to the deliverance from Egypt. From the exode to the birth of our Saviour, the difference is only 117 years, 112 of which belong to the time of the Judges, and the remaining five are scattered over the long space which intervened between the foundation of the temple and the thirtieth year of Augustus Caesar."

The first book embraces the period from the death of Joshua to the commencement of the regal government. The first chapter of this book is devoted to a consideration of the civil and political constitution of the Hebrews. During this period, the Jewish history is particularly obscure, and affords very few data from which any certain conclusions can be drawn with respect either to the general state of society, or the political relations which bound the several tribes together in a kind of federal connexion. Moses, who had been their leader during their wanderings in the wilderness, on the point of death named his successor, but Joshua appointed no one to supply his place. In his address to the tribes, and in the speech which he afterwards made at Shechem, no allusion was made to any form of government which he wished them to adopt, nor can it be determined by any act of public authority recorded, what was the form of administration which prevailed after the military government under Moses and Joshua had ceased. Every tribe seems to have conducted its own affairs. The patriarchal government was the only one to which the sons of Jacob had been accustomed, till, during their wanderings in the wilderness and before they were finally settled in the promised land, the family jurisdiction was superseded. Their inspired leader was esteemed and obeyed as the Lieutenant of the Lord of Hosts, and his successor, Joshua, was considered invested with the same authority. The princes of tribes and heads of families were converted into captains of thousands, of hundreds, and of fifties, but when settled, they seemed to revert to the more ancient form of society.

As property is the basis of power, it seemed necessary, under the head of the Civil and Political Constitution of the Hebrews, to give an account of the Agrarian law sanctioned by Moses and acted upon by Joshua. The extent of the Hebrew territory is computed to have been sufficient to allow to every Hebrew capable of bearing arms a lot of about twenty acres, besides what was reserved for the cities of the Levites and for public uses. The territory was equally divided among the tribes and families according to their respective numbers, nor, whatever may be supposed by Harrington, is there any reason to conclude positively, that the princes of tribes and heads of families were supplied with a larger portion of land than fell to the inheritance of an ordinary household. As the landed property of every Hebrew was inalienable, and every incumbrance must be cleared off in the year of jubilee, no individual could dispose of his estate for more than a certain number of years. Houses in fields and villages were on the same footing as lands, and must return to their respective owners at the year of jubilee. Houses in cities were redeemable only for one year, after which the sale was binding for ever. Equality of wealth was thus, perhaps, as nearly as possible preserved; together with equality of rank and political importance, which appears to have been one of the main objects contemplated in the Mosaic constitution. The Hebrews held their land on military service, every man of competent age being bound to bear arms in defence of the country. This is illustrated by the severe punishment inflicted on the men of Jabesh Gilead, who had not sent any aid to the confederate army in the war against the Benjamites.

With respect to civil constitution, it appears that in every tribe there was a chief called the prince of the tribe, or the head of thousands, and under him the princes of families, or commanders of hundreds.

“Most probably the first-born of the senior family of each tribe was usually received as the prince of that tribe, and that the eldest son of every family succeeded his father in the honours and duties which belonged to the rank of a patriarch. The prince of the tribe presided over its affairs, administered justice in all ordinary cases, and led the troops in time of war. He was assisted in these important duties by the subordinate officers, the chiefs of families, who formed his council in such matters of policy as affected their particular district, supported his decisions in civil or criminal inquiries, and commanded under him in the field of battle.”

The system of polity was not confined to the government of separate tribes; some traces are to be found, even in the disorderly period which immediately followed the settlement in the promised land, of a general government, a great council or senate of elders, to decide in cases of difficulty and danger. Sometimes a judge was invested with a high degree of executive authority, and lastly the concurrence of the congregation of Israel appears to have been at all times necessary to give vigour and effect to the resolutions of the leaders; but in no case could any measure of importance be determined upon without the voice of Jehovah, revealed by Urim and Thummim, to sanction it. Neither the general council nor the judge, how extensive soever might be their powers, possessed the privilege of making laws; this was retained by the Divine Head of the nation. The occasional meetings of the princes of tribes and patriarchal chiefs were the only national council, and had no resemblance to the Council of Seventy established by Moses in the wilderness, nor to the Sanhedrim, which most probably had no existence prior to the Babylonish captivity. This council only met occasionally on great emergencies, having no stated times of assembling.

The Judges were magistrates differing considerably from the public officers of every other country. They were like the Carthaginian Suffetes in scarcely any thing but the name שופטים. They bear scarcely any resemblance to the Greek Archon or the Roman Consul, or to the Roman Dictator; except that the latter was invested with power only when the exigence of affairs required the aid of superior talents or the weight of a supernatural appointment. But the Hebrew Judge retained his high authority during his life. The Dictator resigned his office when the crisis which called for him was over. There are no means of determining how the Judges were elected; they appear in general to have derived their appointment from a divine commission impressed upon their minds by a supernatural impulse, or conveyed to them formally by the mouth of a prophet. Provision was made by Moses, and established by Joshua, for the due administration of justice throughout the land. “Judges and officers, said Moses, shalt thou establish in all thy gates.” There was doubtless a distinction between judges and officers, but the sacred records afford no definite description of their several functions. We find that all the Israelites were either shepherds or agriculturists, from the princes of Judah down to the meanest family of Benjamin, nor can we observe any distinction of rank springing from wealth, office, or profession.

The Levites were not wholly confined to spiritual offices. They supplied the whole nation of the Israelites with judges, lawyers, scribes, teachers and physicians. The learned professions were made hereditary in the several families of Levi, who had no inheritance in the land, but were to receive

from their brethren a tenth part of the gross produce. The better to effect the purposes for which they were intended, they were distributed among all the tribes, and had a certain number of cities set apart for their maintenance. Six of the Levitical cities had the privilege of affording refuge and protection to a certain class of criminals, and each of their cities was a school as well as a seat of justice.

"There the language, the traditions, the history, and the laws of their nation were the constant objects of study, pursued with that zeal and earnestness which can only arise from the feeling of a sacred obligation combined with the impulse of an ardent patriotism. Within their holy walls were deposited copies of their religious, moral and civil institutions, which it was their duty not only to preserve but to multiply. They kept besides the genealogies of the tribes, in which they marked the lineage of every family which could trace its descent from the father of the faithful. Being well instructed in the law, and possessed of the annals of their people from the earliest days, they were well qualified to supply the courts with judges and scribes, men who were fitted not only to administer justice, but also to keep a record of all their decisions."

The second chapter treats of the Religious Belief and Practices of the Ancient Hebrews. We are not to look for the practical belief of the Israelites in the institutes of the Mosaic law. There it is simple and clear enough; but we must gather much from casual notices in the narrative of the historian and the remonstrances of the prophet. During the time of the Judges, the pure religious faith which had enlightened and elevated the minds of the ancient patriarchs, had been corrupted by mixing with idolaters, and by an evident proneness to unite with them in their absurd worship. Still the traces of a pure and uncorrupted faith are to be found in their devotional compositions. They recognized one great almighty Cause, the source of all existence, the director of all events, an unceasing providence the rewarder of goodness, the punisher of vice. Our author notices a distinction in some of the Hebrew writings between the notions entertained of the Deity when worshiped as the God of the whole earth, where his attributes are described in simple, sublime, and appropriate language, and those descriptions which are applied to him as the tutelary God of the Hebrews, which are deficient in the dignity and elevation that belong to the greater part of the ancient Scriptures. The devotional and prophetic writings of the Scriptures place God before our minds in terms as sublime and simple as are suitable to the dignity of the Divine attributes, so far as *that* is comprehensible by the human intellect; but in speaking of him as the tutelary God of the nation, words and actions are ascribed to him of a much more familiar nature, though they never fall into the error of heathen writers who multiply the number of their gods.

With respect to the evil principle, in the simple theology which the Jews held previously to the Babylonish captivity, they never doubted that all events, good or evil, proceeded from Jehovah. They believed in the existence of intellectual beings superior to the human race, who, though they might vary in the benevolence or malignity of their dispositions, were under the constant and immediate controul of the Deity. The doctrine of two independent principles was as yet unknown in Palestine. Not the least allusion is found in the early records to Satan as the chief of the malignant angels, or as counteracting the designs of the Almighty. The notion can be found in none of the sacred books composed previously to the return from Babylon, and we find the same event, which in the 24th chapter of the 2nd Book of Samuel is ascribed to the anger of the Lord, is in the 21st chapter of the 1st Book of Chronicles (compiled after the return from Babylon)

attributed to Satan, who is there spoken of as a voluntary, independent agent. That any evil spirit can controul the will of the Almighty, that evil entered into the world by means of such a malignant being, is a doctrine which cannot indeed be found by a diligent perusal of the sacred writings; we must look for its origin somewhere else.

Our author next considers the belief of the *ancient* HEBREWS with respect to the doctrine of the TRINITY! He very justly observes, that

“—in all investigations of this nature, we ought to confine our inquiries to the writings and religious usages of the Israelites themselves, as we find these recorded in the canonical books of Scripture, placing ourselves as nearly as possible on the very ground which they occupied at the particular period in which the history is to be examined. Many authors, neglecting this indispensable rule, have had no difficulty to discover in the creed of the Hebrews all the articles of the Christian faith; and proceeding on the footing which they have thus assumed, they interpret the writings of the earliest ages upon principles which were entirely unknown both to those who composed those writings and to those who were to read them. Others, again, have sought a basis for the profoundest doctrines of our holy religion in the uncertain deductions of verbal criticism, drawing from the grammatical properties of a language which is no longer clearly understood, a system of belief which ought to have for its authority the plainest declarations of inspired truth.”

To this statement we can readily assent; but we can hardly come to the same conclusions at which Dr. Russell afterwards arrives, that the Hebrews entertained the notion of a plurality of hypostases in the Godhead; nor that the gospel supplied what is wanting to a distinct conception of the doctrine of a Trinity in Unity. How it can be apparent that what he calls the *true* doctrine relative to the Divine nature was known to the patriarchs and the inspired teachers under the law, we cannot well conceive. We may think it possible that the inspired Father of the Hebrew tribes, who predicted the blessings to be poured on the world by the Prince of Peace, knew the relation in which the Deliverer stood to the Sovereign Ruler of the world; but it is also at least *possible*, that he had not any idea of a Trinity in Unity in the Godhead. Nor can we readily accord with him, that if we confine our attention to the institutions of the religion established by Moses, and to the devotional exercises directed by his successors, we can find intimation of a plurality of persons in the Divine nature. From the facts which Dr. Russell has adduced—the divine appearances to various individuals, the visit of the three angels to Abraham at Mamre, of two to Lot, of another to Jacob, of the captain of the Lord's Host to Joshua—we cannot see how the candid reader is to agree with Dr. Allix, that the Jews had grounds for acknowledging plurality in the Deity.

The next section of this chapter is devoted to an inquiry into the opinions of the ancient Hebrews with respect to the Immortality of the Soul. In the wilderness, and for a long time after their settlement in Canaan, they had no ideas of the future existence of the soul, connected with the expectation of reward or punishment. Whatever knowledge Moses might possess upon this subject, “the doctrine of immortality, and of reward and punishment in the unseen world, was not employed by that inspired legislator as the sanction of his laws, nor as the motive of obedience to the government which he established among the descendants of Jacob.” It was not till a period considerably later, that the doctrine of immortality was comprehended by the worshipers of Jehovah, nor for many centuries after the death of their divine legislator did they seek any other evidence that they were under the special protection of Heaven, besides abundance in their harvests

and success in their wars. But though not established as a religious motive, it is probable that the Israelites had some ideas of a future state of existence from their long residence in Egypt, where it was certainly entertained at a period considerably more ancient than the arrival of Jacob and his family into the kingdom of the Pharaohs. According to Herodotus, the Egyptians were the first people who defended the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, on which was afterwards engrafted the doctrine of the metempsychosis, which was carried into Greece at a later period by Pythagoras and other inquirers who had travelled into Egypt in pursuit of knowledge.

"If the conclusions now drawn," says Dr. Russell, "be founded upon accurate views of ancient learning, we can be at no loss to discover a better reason why Moses did not introduce into his system of laws the sanction of future rewards and punishments, than that he was desirous to conceal from his people the important doctrine of the immortality of the soul. It will appear that he did not, as has been represented, throw a studied obscurity over every fact which was likely to suggest to the Hebrews the idea of a future state of existence, but rather that he himself did not enjoy such distinct views of the condition of the human soul after death, as were fitted to be made the foundation of a system of moral retribution in a divine economy."

Our author supposes that the language of the Pentateuch and of the Prophets confirms the notion that the doctrines of the existence of the soul, when separated from the body, and of a metempsychosis, were incorporated at a very early period into the popular creed of the Hebrews. In support of his position the use of the words שְׁאוֹל and קֶבֶר is adduced. By שְׁאוֹל is meant the state of the dead, the place of departed spirits, and like *ἀδης* it suggests to the imagination the silence, darkness and mysterious dread connected with the unseen world: קֶבֶר signifies only a tomb or grave. In the Septuagint, שְׁאוֹל is always translated by *ἀδης*, and, as Dr. Russell argues, signifies invariably the state of the dead, the region of departed spirits; while קֶבֶר as invariably is translated by some word which signifies a grave or tomb. Several instances are given as examples, none of which, in our opinion, are decisive on the question; and the conclusion which he draws from the words of Christ, addressed to the thief on the cross, is quite untenable. The only passage which seems to corroborate his opinion, is that sublime one of Isaiah, where the dead are represented as being thrown into commotion at the approach of the Babylonish prince; but we are more inclined to regard this fine passage as a beautiful rhetorical figure, than as expressing either a philosophical or religious opinion. Dr. Russell conceives that the popular opinions respecting the forerunner of the Messiah are decisive as to the fact of the doctrine of the metempsychosis forming part of the practical belief at that time, since it was expected that he would be animated by the soul of one of the ancient prophets, and Christ himself was supposed by some to be Elias or Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. After a great deal of learned and ingenious argument respecting the opinions of early times with regard to the state of the dead, Dr. Russell sums up by saying,

"In a word, Moses did not avail himself, as a lawgiver, of the hopes and fears which respect eternity, because he was ignorant of the only foundation on which these sentiments could be made to rest, the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body; and not because he was disposed or commanded to conceal from the people of Israel those most powerful of all motives to virtue and godliness of living."

We may continue this subject in a future Number.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

ART. V.—*The Prospects of Christianity: a Sermon, delivered at the Ordination of the Rev. Warren Burton.* By F. W. P. Greenwood. Boston, U. S.

The Exclusive System: a Discourse delivered in Gorton, Massachusetts. By James Walker. Boston, U. S.

WE are well aware that the popularity which the discourses of American Ministers have obtained in this country, is regarded, by here and there an individual, with some degree of suspicion, as if it were not the truth, but something new in the manner of stating it, which had gained upon the affections of the people; and as it is impossible to penetrate into motives, the attempt to prove that such a notion is mistaken, may be as idle as the original charge.

The fact is certain, that the sermons of Dr. Channing and Dr. Ware, and several other American ministers, are eagerly read and sought after among English Unitarians, and that their popularity is decidedly upon the increase. In looking over a number of discourses and tracts, recently sent hither from Boston, we have been struck by the eminently practical character of the whole, and we cannot entertain a doubt that it is to *this* we are to attribute their acceptableness. Of minute biblical criticism we have found very little; the appeal lies mostly to human feelings and the strength of human reasoning, exercised in comparing the general spirit of the gospel with the spirit of exclusive and narrow systems. The scholar must not think *his* labours undervalued, if it should appear that these plain, energetic, forcible appeals are exciting a degree of interest which he may think disproportioned to their intrinsic worth. The different members of the body of Christ may each perform their several offices, and there need be no division among them.

Mr. Walker's sermon on the Exclusive System is altogether one of the closest and strongest pieces of reasoning in favour of entire religious liberty we ever met with.—The following remarks have struck us as admirable:

"Much stress is laid on the distinc-

tion, that modern Exclusionists, at least in this country, do not avail themselves of the aid of the civil arm. But it should be considered, that the true question is, not whether they avail themselves of the aid of the civil arm, but whether their measures are not adapted to injure us in our civil relations. The injustice of former Exclusionists, the Spanish Inquisition for example, did not consist simply in employing the civil arm to inflict the penalties they adjudged, but in adjudging such penalties as affected the supposed mi-believer in his civil relations. What if, instead of intrusting the execution of their sentence to the civil officer, they had chosen to use the influence they possessed over the public mind, to cause their victim to be put under the ban of society; or had given him up to be torn in pieces on the spot by an incensed populace? Would this have made the proceeding less cruel, or less unrighteous?

"Now, will any one pretend, that the Exclusionists of this country do not aim to injure their opponents in their civil relations? Denounce me as an enemy of the truth, and a hater of God; call in question my sincerity, and impute my supposed errors to a corrupt heart; hold me up as a dangerous man in the community, a man with whom it must be unsafe to associate from the contagion of my bad principles; make use of my religious opinions to prevent my political elevation, or represent them as a sufficient reason why I should not be entrusted with the education of the young; this is the course pursued by most Exclusionists in this country; and will any one pretend, that this is not to attempt to injure me in my civil relations? Is it not to attempt to injure me in my standing and prospects in society? But my standing and prospects in society are as much my property, as a good citizen, as my houses and lands; and nothing, therefore, will justify an attempt to injure me in one, which would not also justify an attempt to injure me in the other. Make it to be just to do what the Exclusionists of this country have often done; make it to be just to sow dissension in my family, to injure me in the good opinion of my friends and the community, to subject me to any impu-

tation whereby I may suffer either in my comfort, business, or character as a member of society; make it to be just to do this, without any authority for so doing, on the strength of a mere opinion, which may be right, or may be wrong, and there is nothing the Spanish Inquisition ever did, which was not just. I do not mean that the conduct of modern Exclusionists is equally revolting to humanity; but I maintain that it is equally irreconcilable with the principles of strict justice and religious liberty.

"Once more, it may be replied, that my objections are still directed against the abuses of the Exclusive System, or at least against incidental effects, and not against the system itself. Men may be Exclusionists, sincere and consistent, and yet their only object may be to sever the erring member's connexions with the church; and if their doing this has the effect to injure him in his civil relations, it is an effect merely incidental, and not intended; and consequently neither they nor the system are responsible for it.

"I deny that this effect is merely incidental. The system and its abettors are responsible, not only for its immediate effects, and those which are really desired and intended, but also for all those which they must see will follow, not incidentally, but necessarily. Now the very act of severing a man's connexions with the church on the principle avowed in this system, is to hold him up to view as an infidel, and the more to be dreaded and shunned because a disguised infidel. And will any one pretend that this must not necessarily injure a man in his civil relations? Would any one like to have his children regard him as an infidel? Would a man be as likely to form good connexions in life, or be received into good society, if he were regarded by all who knew him as an infidel? With respect to many, would it not even affect the confidence reposed in him as a man of business, to have it generally understood that he is a disguised infidel? We all attach some importance to the moral restraints which Christianity imposes; and must it not, therefore, take something from a man's credit in the community, to have it supposed that these restraints are not felt by him? All these effects must be seen to follow, not incidentally, but necessarily, from the very act of severing a man's connexions with the church, on the ground that he is not a Christian. You may say, perhaps, that if he is not a Christian, they ought to follow. And so they should;

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but not until this question is decided by a competent authority. You have no right to touch a hair of his head, on the ground that he is not a Christian, until this question has been decided by a competent authority."—Pp. 25—28.

The discourse of Mr. Greenwood is of a different character. It is an elegant and animated piece of writing, full of the spirit of hope and confidence.

"There is," says the author, "a strict affinity between Christianity and all that is good in our nature and great in our destiny; and though oceans and ages intervene, they will find each other out at last."

We trust that both these admirable sermons will be reprinted, and read and acted upon in this country.

ART. VI.—*The English in France.*
By the Author of "*the English in Italy.*" 3 Vols. 8vo. London. 1828.

WE notice this book solely for the purpose of extracting a passage which is interesting and instructive as to the state of opinion and parties in France.

"Religion and Philosophy, those two natural allies, which, united, are invincible, but which, separated, fall easy victims to each other's enmity, ran each its short-lived course, the one falling under the blows of the other, and itself surviving but a short period of contempt and disgrace. The reflecting Frenchman of the present day, uninstructed in creed, with his own principles to form, his own education to conduct, looks back on the history of this period, and cannot fail to regard both the religion and the philosophy of the eighteenth century with contempt; the one as inept, bigot, blind, immoral, neither in unison with its law nor obedient to its precepts; the other as selfish, degrading, illusive, neither founded in rational cause, nor productive of the mighty effects which it promised. With him all is level. His mind is the true *tabula rasa*; the old and received principles of moral and intellectual science rejected, and others yet to be fixed in their stead.

"Such being the state of things, you have the key to the three parties which morally divide the nation. The first, and now the most antiquated and least considerable, is composed of the dregs of the *philosophic* school, whose learning never wandered beyond the sixty vo-

lumes of Voltaire's works, and whose negative creed is therein contained. These are the upholders of the *sensation* system of Condillac, and of the *intérêt bien entendu* of Helvetius. They are not much given, however, to moral or philosophical discussion; such matters, according to them, having been irrevocably decided by the great men of the eighteenth century, whom they worship. The grave and unwieldy weapons of serious argument they have almost resigned, and appear no longer but as light troops, flinging their javelins of wit upon their enemies. They deal in epigram, *bon-mot*, and repartee; are fond of irony: and, as they have been long used to the rule of despotism, none know better than they how to hide satire in an allegory, or to veil it in an allusion. They are old *contrebandiers* in adroitly introducing their illicit sarcasms and attacks, despite the *douaniers* of the censorship. In this consists their principal merit. In other respects they have become antiquated, and have lost all hold on the public mind, which has at last begun to perceive the inconsistency of an attachment at once to liberty and to Bonaparte. This latter was, and still remains, their god. They are still full of the inflated style of the republic and the empire; still love the grandeur and the imposing, invoke *la patrie* and *le peuple Français*, on all solemn occasions: they think patriotism to consist in national self-flattery of the grossest kind, and in illiberality and contempt towards foreign nations. At the very name of religion they smile, and scoff of course all idea of its resurrection. Their everlasting sneer, however, has grown stale, in the way of argument, and passes no longer current as before. While, with respect to their other great principle, the general ebb of sympathy and admiration from the memory of Napoleon has left them aground and cast away upon a desert shore.

"The second class is composed of the religionists; those who seek to restore the people to their lost faith, and that, as it would appear, not so much with a view towards the safety of their souls, as to ensure the tranquillity of the state. I have read some of the most eloquent works, written by this class to forward their project of restoring the *culte*, and, do you know, I have been surprised by the want of bigotry which marks them, and, at the same time, the want of true religious enthusiasm. Religion seems with them to be a nostrum, most bene-

ficial to the moral and political health of the living species. It prevents crime, more especially that against the state; it fills the mind with wholesome terrors of an invincible's vicegerent, a king by divine right. It renders a people mild, submissive, contented; and being of lighter specific gravity than any of the other opinions which are apt to agitate and mingle with folks' thoughts, it floats over all, and, like oil on the surface of the waters, it presses down their agitation, and stills all undue propensity to motion.

"These seem to be the advantages which they promise and which they preach. Of immortality to be earned, of bliss in after-life, or of future rewards and punishments, they make slight mention. Those, which with our missionaries would be all in all, with them is but in second rank. Of course they suit their arguments to their super-rational age. And with such they may gain from some a condescending admission of the use of religion, but a true convert to its spirit they will never make.

"The conversion of the risen generation was a task hopeless to them. They have abandoned it, and confined their views to the monopoly of education, resolving that the next race at least should not escape them. The scheme might neither have been pernicious nor blameable, had it been fairly and openly conducted. But by making use of the renovated sect of the Jesuits to effect this, and by bringing the strong hand of the government to support them, the public were disgusted, irritated, and frightened into opposition; and this scheme, like so many others, has of late fallen to the ground from the want of moderation, of honesty and prudence, in the means of promoting it.

"The remaining class is that of the youth and young manhood of the day, uninfluenced by recollections either of the empire or of the ancient régime, and discoursing alike on religion and materialism. They are spirits full of enthusiasm, full of candour, full of eagerness after the truth, unbiassed, and as yet undecided. Placed betwixt two extreme and conflicting parties, holding a kind of medium between them, they have at once felt the strength of this neutral position, and perceived that by keeping aloof, they can be always ready and able to bring succour to that party which is most oppressed, or which promises better for liberty of thought, and the welfare of the species. As it is, however, impossible

to form a moral sect, any more than a political party, without erecting for it a distinct standard, without forming some mass of principle, without founding itself, in fine, on some grounds more noble and substantial than mere negative ideas, mere dissent, this third class have

adopted a creed, vague indeed and undefined, as yet extant but in airy speculation, yet for that very cause more convenient. To define what this creed, or those principles are, is beyond my power."—Vol. III. pp. 222—229.

OCCASIONAL CORRESPONDENCE.

On R. M.'s Questions on the Atonement.
To the Editor.

SIR,

Ireland, June 13, 1828.

"IN the spirit of candour and sincere inquiry after truth," which I cordially believe has actuated your correspondent "R. M.," in your Number for May, I beg to offer a very few comments on the subject, upon which, in common with him, I entertain a very anxious interest; and which, if treated in the manner his example recommends, instead of in that acrimonious, dogmatic, and insolent tone, which is alike the bane of all Christian charity and all rational discussion, might be rendered the source of much pleasurable excitement to the mind, and of mutual instruction to the contending parties.

I think I can discover one deep error at the foundation of the reasoning to which R. M. seems at present disposed to resign himself. In speaking of the JUSTICE OF GOD, he appears to answer the Unitarian's objection,—that to have treated Christ, who was really innocent, as if he were a guilty person, "would be a counterfeit of justice, and a collusion beneath the character of God,"—by urging *the reverse* of that treatment, with respect to man, which he supposes to be *the admitted doctrine* of Scripture, namely, that it can *as little* become the justice of God to treat, as innocent, him who is "actually and really guilty."

But *is* this the doctrine of Scripture? I apprehend not. To me it is apparent that no person is said to be forgiven, upon mere faith, unless that faith include in it a *renunciation of sin*, and the commencing of a totally opposite course of thought and action. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." Of which newness, and putting away of former evil habits,

&c., baptism was the external sign; intimating, by the submersion then practised in that form, that, having buried, or drowned,—and, as the apostle, always exuberant in figures, sometimes expresses it, "crucified the old man;" the body of sin being thus destroyed, men should thenceforth no longer serve it.

Now I put it to the verdict of unsophisticated human nature, whether *that* be the same attribute which would forgive the unconverted, the unrepenting, the wilful, hardened, insensible, offender, with that which would extend a pardon to the humble, contrite, confessing, regenerated, suppliant, whom alone the Scriptures and common sense recognise as the genuine Christian believer? Is the former, which is the proceeding your correspondent would seem to fix upon the Deity, a remission consistent with justice? No; it is an indulgence granted upon the most arbitrary, improper, and mischievous grounds.

Is the latter, supposing it to be an *uncircuitous* and *uninfluenced* manifestation of favour towards repentance, *inconsistent* with it? No; it is a mercy administered upon the most intelligible, worthy, and beneficial grounds.

I could wish your correspondent, and all the unbigoted orthodox, (among whom I have pleasure in recollecting "Clericus Cantabrigiensis," nor would I willingly exclude Dr. Pye Smith from the number,) to consider well, that mercy and justice are absolutely consentaneous; and that, correctly understood, each may be said to lose itself in the other. For mercy never pardons where justice disapproves; and justice never desires to punish where mercy can be fitly applied. The Divine Mercy is exerted only when it is *proper* to be exerted; and it would be as much a violation of justice as it would of mercy, *not* to exert it when it *is* proper.

Speaking strictly, therefore—and in

laying the foundation of so AMAZING a doctrine as the Atonement, we cannot be too exact in our expressions—speaking strictly, I say, it is not “clemency,” as your correspondent observes, but EQUITY which “frees from punishment;” of which equity, or perfect “equality,” in the ways of God, we have the most distinct and unimpeachable enunciation in the eighteenth and thirty-third chapters of the Prophet Ezekiel.

I repeat, then, that justice and mercy, in their essence, and as they exist in the Divine Mind, must be ONE.

To suppose them different, is to suppose that God can only be just by the sacrifice of mercy, or merciful by violating justice!—suppositions too lowering to the Creator to be admitted for a moment.

It is true that, in dispensing forgiveness, he departs from the *letter* of the law; for no law contains within itself any pardon for its own infraction. But in so doing, far from being unjust, he would doubtless be doing what was most just; for in particular circumstances, *summum jus* would be *summa injuria*. A law can only be designed to procure the greatest possible amount of obedience to it. But if it were a principle undoubtingly received, that a person having once offended *could never be forgiven*, all endeavour at *recovery* would be abandoned. Perseverance in sin would be the consequence; and the amount of disobedience, the very thing against which the law was directed, be incalculably augmented.

In a word, Sir, the natural theology to which I am adverting, would in effect dethrone the Most High, by depriving him alike of mercy and of justice; for where there is *no pardon*, as this system supposes, there can be no mercy. And not less signally would it deprive him of justice; for to hold the *penitent* and impenitent—him *who renounces* and *grieves for his sin*, and him who corruptly and proudly persists in it, as *both* guilty, and *both* to take up their station among the wicked and the damned; this, surely, would be the consummation of all injustice!

I have said thus much, in order to fix the attention of your correspondent upon the most important and critical step in the whole of this truly interesting inquiry, namely, the nature of the *introductory theology* to which he has given his assent, and by which he seems for the present to be held in suspense. For if,

on the one hand, nature and reason instruct us that God is *unforgiving*, revelation can never legitimately persuade us of that to which all our previous information is unequivocally adverse.

And, on the other hand, if nature and reason assure us that God is *compassionate*, full of mercy and consideration towards those who deplore and depart from their sins; that such is his essential character as a Being of perfection, who regulates his judgments not less in equity than in mercy, and as the source from whence his human creatures are to derive an ever-increasing invigoration of all their moral notions and habits; then, again, no system professing to be revealed, nor *any interpretation of it*, can be entitled to our credence, which would subvert or enfeeble these imperishable principles.

It behoves, then, those who venerate Scripture, and who regard Revelation as the most unbounded of blessings, from its giving assurance to the most sacred and interesting hopes of mankind, not to *weaken its evidence* by removing the principal pillar upon which it reposes.

The most successful defender of revealed religion who has ever written—I need scarcely advert to the name of PALEY—has assumed it as the basis of his defence, that it was *suitable to the benevolence* of the Deity to grant a revelation. What would become of that defence, if it were either to be shewn that there was no discoverable benevolence in the Deity to which that revelation should conform, or no indication in the system professing to come from him, of any intrinsic benevolence ascribable to its Author?

Sir, I believe it to be most fortunate for the truth of that system which, in proportion as intelligence diffuses itself, will be more and more submitted to the test of inquiry, that the reverse of these imagined demonstrations will be found to be the fact, as well in revealed as in natural theology; nor can I close these few observations, as suggested by a consideration of the latter, without referring to the gratifying conformity with them which we find in two out of multitudes of passages which might be cited to the same effect,—the one from the Old, the other from the New Testament, which seem to affirm the direct, *undisguised*, uninfluenced benevolence of the Deity in terms not more impressive from their tenderness than indelible from their distinctness:

“The Lord is full of COMPASSION and

mercy, long-suffering, and of great goodness: yea, like as a FATHER pitieth his own children, even so is the Lord merciful unto them that fear him. For he knoweth whereof we are made; he remembereth that we are but dust."

The second passage may be anticipated to relate to the Prodigal Son, whom, upon returning to his duty, "when he was yet a great way off, his FATHER saw, and had COMPASSION, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him."

Now, Sir, I would humbly inquire, do these two passages, sustained as they are by the more formal avowals in the eighteenth and thirty-third chapters of Ezekiel, respond to the voice of nature and reason, or do they not? If they do, must they yield to MYSTERY; must they give way to supposed intimations between which and the forgiveness of sins the want of "*discoverable connexion*" stands confessed; * or must these intimations, and this apparent mystery, be interpreted by, and made to yield to, them?

If they do not—if in their naked, unsupported sense, there be any thing suggested by them contrary to equity, contrary to fitness, and *unworthy of the character* of the Creator—I am ready to be better informed; and referring, in the meantime, to the truly satisfactory dissertation contained in the commencement of Dr. Sykes's Scripture Doctrine of Redemption, and to the more early but not less masterly and conclusive dis-

course of "Modest FOSTER," (as Pope has designated him,) on the Placability of God, I remain, &c.

G. A.

London University.

To the Editor.

SIR,

I AM not at all satisfied of the propriety of giving way to what I consider a senseless and dishonest clamour, by the half-and-half measure of inviting different sects to establish Theological Lectures in a species of connexion with, or at least in the immediate neighbourhood of, the University; but if the system *be* begun, it seems desirable that the instruction should not be confined to one denomination of Christians; and I therefore wish to ask, whether the parties entitled to appropriate the remains of the Hackney College Fund might not meet and consider the propriety of founding with it a professorship of liberal theology? What the present application of the fund is I do not know; but I cannot help thinking that an appropriation of the kind suggested, under public supervision, would be likely to be at least as salutary as the continuance of the present private disposition of the fund, whatever it be. Can any of your readers say how far that part of the fund which is composed of Brown's legacy is applicable to the purpose suggested, or is more properly applied at present; and who, under his will, ought to determine that question?

AN OLD STUDENT.

* Magee on the Atonement, Discourse I.

OBITUARY.

MR. JOHN ROWE.

"December 17th, 1827. At *Potreros*, in *Mexico*, aged 29, Mr. JOHN ROWE, Superintendent of the mines of Bolanos, only son of the Rev. John Rowe, of this city. After having essentially contributed to the successful termination of labours of extreme difficulty, requiring no ordinary degree of judgment, enterprise, and perseverance, Mr. Rowe was stationed at Bolanos, in a situation of comparative ease; but the fatigues and anxiety he had undergone laid the foundation of a disease which, after the ill-

ness of a few days, has thus blighted the hopes of his friends, and deprived the Real del Monte Company of his important services."—*Bristol Journal*, March 29, 1828.

Many weeks have elapsed since this announcement of an event which had then just reached the family and friends of the deceased, appeared in the public prints; an event which may fitly demand a somewhat more extended and less perishable record. He who at last ventures upon this melancholy task has been hitherto deterred by the opposite fears

of indulging his feelings too much, or of restraining them too carefully—but love must cast out fear.

From early childhood, courage, used in its largest sense, moral as well as physical, was the pervading characteristic of the deceased. Thrown early into situations which required self-reliance and energy, John Rowe added force to the naturally strong powers of his well-cultivated mind, by keeping them in exercise. Firm and efficient, undertaking silently, he executed perseveringly, and seemed to regard reverse and disappointment rather as adding to his stock of useful and available experience, than as clouding his prospect or diminishing his chance of ultimate success. With a singularly cool and reflecting judgment, he acted, when once entered on a pursuit, as though he were inspired with the confidence and zeal of the most sanguine. Yet vanity or self-sufficiency had no part in him; he was often silent when many others would have spoken; but it was an honest, single-minded reserve—an unaffected absence of display—as far removed, too, from want of kindness as from want of intelligence.

With very little acquaintance or communication, certain indications of character, more easily felt than described, imparted the conviction of John Rowe's perfect integrity. A shrewd observer of mankind, and the more so from being habitually attentive to the workings of his own mind, the results he drew resolved themselves into a practical philosophy of thought and conduct, very benevolent, very energetic, and very straightforward. Steadfast in his friendships, and most affectionate in his family relations, his mind seemed to relax and enjoy itself with peculiar zest, in performing quiet and unnoticed acts of kindness to his inferiors; and many are the unknown regrets and unheard blessings which follow him.

All things savouring of tyranny, or finesse, or vacillation, were objects of his uncompromising dislike. Cruelty or deceit, in any guise, (and more particularly when directed towards others,) kindled instant indignation. This unchecked evidence of high principle and a naturally warm temperament, abstracted nothing from his usefulness, and could not, and ought not, to have been withheld. Never expressed unless called for, his zeal for justice and truth increased the influence which they who associated with him unconsciously acknowledged; for they knew he was always ready to act, and that having

already arrived at his own firm and virtuous conclusion, he never used words to convince or to encourage himself. They knew, too, how much more often kind and happy emotion suddenly lighted up his features than even transient anger flushed them, and how readily forgiveness followed the sense of injury.

He was fond of mechanics from infancy, and striking testimonies to his early proficiency in mechanical knowledge still remain. He had also informed himself well in practical chemistry, and was as patient in searching out the causes of success or failure in his experiments, as he was ingenious in applying or removing them. Whatever engaged him he loved to do or to understand completely, and he would rather work out the information he sought for himself at once, than postpone his inquiry until easier means might offer.

During a residence in Spain and at Gibraltar he had made himself master of the Spanish language, and enlarged his acquaintance with mankind. Thus qualified, the formation of the Real del Monte Mining Company supplied him, in his 26th year, with an opportunity of being usefully engaged in the prosecution of that vast undertaking, which, as it held out a fair prospect of rewarding great exertion, threatened also to call for it. A generous spirit of adventure entered largely into the motives which guided his decision to share in this distant enterprise. It was a new era as well as a new world which attracted him, and he anticipated that while the great, the beautiful, the unexplored works of nature repaid the search of ardent curiosity, and raised and gratified still nobler feelings, the interests of his native country, and the civilization of his species, would be promoted.

He left England in March, in 1825, one of the superior officers of a transport party, by whose exertions stores and the ponderous machinery of steam engines were to be conveyed through surfs, and torrents, and quicksands, and over ravines and mountains, far into the interior of Mexico. The party reached Vera Cruz too late in the season to encounter with safety the numerous delays and obstacles which presented themselves. Guided and assisted, however, by his friend and companion J. N. Colquhoun, Esq., (who, with the master key of a powerful mind and a warm heart, opened all congenial resources,) these difficulties were encountered by him without hesitation. The rainy season set in but too early on a pestilential coast;

severe hardships, much sickness, many deaths ensued. He toiled with the strong, he cheered the failing, he comforted the dying. We shall not enter into the miserable detail of various and protracted suffering; suffice it to say, that in defiance of all difficulties, and of great diminution of numbers, they accomplished their undertaking in every point, and the Directors of the Company testified, in the most handsome and unequivocal manner, their deep sense of the dangerous and important nature of the services which Mr. Rowe had rendered.

Having recently undertaken the local charge of the Mines of Bolanos, situated in the state of Guadalupe, and belonging to a Company under nearly the same direction as the mines of Real del Monte, he had just arrived there to pitch his often-removed tent for a continuance and in peace. On an occasion, however, of comparatively slight excitement, latent disease of a dangerous character manifested itself, and medical aid, most skilfully and affectionately administered, was administered in vain. Symptoms of fatal disorder appeared in rapid suc-

cession, and, alas! with irresistible force.

So distant from all his dearly loved connexions,—far away even from those companions whom mutual dangers and anxieties had attached to him,—almost alone, in a very strange land, “*a remote and insulated spot of difficult access*,”—occupying a station recently and most honourably attained, and at a time of life full of promise and power,—these were considerations which could not tend to alleviate suffering. But the burden was not without its support. The same composure and firmness, founded on the same deeply-seated principles of trust in the Almighty, which had led him steadily through life, attended him faithfully and effectually in his last hours. He thought of his native country and of home, but he thought also of heaven, and of the great Parent who appoints our habitations, and who will, in his own due time, gather his children together. He departed in peace and hope.

July 20, 1828.

INTELLIGENCE.

Manchester College, York.

ON Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, the 24th, 25th, and 26th of June, the Annual Examination was held in the Common Hall of this College, before Daniel Gaskell, Esq., and the Rev. John Kentish, *Vice-Presidents*; G. W. Wood, Esq., *Treasurer*; the Rev. William Turner, *Visitor*; Messrs Bealley, Bell, Heavisides, Johnson, Oates and Rowntree, and the Rev. Messrs. Berry, E. Hawkes, J. Hincks, Johustone, and Lee. The business indeed commenced on Monday afternoon, by a pretty smart contest of five hours among the competitors for the Classical Prize, both *vivâ voce*, and in writing. Tuesday morning, the three Hebrew classes, the junior class in Mental Philosophy, the senior Latin and junior Greek classes, and the Evidence class, were examined till three; and in the evening, Count Pecchio examined his pupils in the Modern Languages. Wednesday, the classes in Modern His-

tory and the Belles Lettres were examined in writing, those in Moral Philosophy and Ancient History, and the junior Latin class, *vivâ voce*; and Orations were delivered at intervals by Mr. Paget on the Progress of the Reformation, Mr. H. Hawkes on the Dramatic Unities, Mr. Davidson on the Importance of the Study of the British Constitution, Mr. Fletcher on the Necessity of the Christian Revelation, Mr. H. Wreford on the Rapid Diffusion of Christianity as furnishing an Evidence of its Divine Origin, Mr. Esdaile on the question, Whether the Decalogue as it appears in the Jewish Code is obligatory as such upon Christians, and by Mr. Hort on the Character of Hebrew Poetry. On Thursday, the Theological and Mathematical classes were examined in writing for three hours, and the senior classes in Mental Philosophy and in Greek, an hour each; and Orations and Sermons were delivered, as the day before, by Mr. Bache, on the Mosaic Po-

lity as wisely adapted to the state of the Jewish People, by Mr. Philipps on the Universal Belief in and Worship of the Deity, Mr. Squire on Luke xxiv. 26, Mr. Higginson on Acts xiv. 15—17, Mr. Rankin on John i. 14, and Mr. Gaskell on Luke xxiv. 26.

The College Prizes, as well as those proposed by individual friends, were then adjudged and delivered as follow: The First Prize for diligence, regularity, and proficiency during the Session, to Mr. Charles Davidson, a Lay-Student in his third year. The second, to Mr. Thomas Baker, and the third, to Mr. Mortimer Maurice, Divinity Students in their first year. The Mathematical Prizes, given by a Friend to the College, to Mr. Davidson in the senior class, and in the junior to Mr. Baker. The Classical Prizes, given by Robert Philips, Esq., to Mr. Robert Mitford Taylor, a Divinity Student in his second year, and to Mr. Edward Worthington, a Lay-Student in his first. The prize offered by Euelpis for a Greek Prose Translation, to Mr. Francis John Rankin, a Divinity Student in his fifth year. The prize given by John Bell, Esq., for the best Latin Prose Composition on the subject, "*Quibus nam de causis eloquentiæ studia magis apud Græcos quam apud Romanos cæterosque populos viguerint?*" to Mr. Charles Fletcher, a Lay Student in his third year. The Treasurer's prizes for the best Oration delivered at this examination, to Mr. Davidson: for the best delivered Oration, to Mr. Higginson.

It was announced, that a prize of Five Guineas is offered by Euelpis for the best Essay on the Difference between Classical Greek and the Greek of the New Testament. The competition to be open to the fifth year's Students of the next Session, and to those who leave the College at the end of this, or who left it at the end of the last Session. The Essays to be delivered in before the last day of May, 1829.

The Visitor then, as usual, closed this long and, on the whole, satisfactory examination, with an Address, which we are sorry that our limits this month oblige us to omit.

The company then separated, after a short devotional exercise, well satisfied with the business of the preceding three days. The attendance had been less numerous than usual, owing to the public meetings in London and Liverpool, during the former week, on the Repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts.

Presentation of a Piece of Plate to the Rev. Charles Berry, Leicester.

THE Unitarian Chapel in Leicester is the oldest, and at the time of its erection in 1708, was the largest, Dissenting place of worship in the town. Hence it acquired the name of *the Great Meeting*; an appellation which it still retains, though several chapels of equal or greater dimensions have since been built by Dissenters of other denominations. The congregation, during the last century, were Arians, and had the happiness for more than half that long period to possess for their pastor the Rev. Hugh Worthington, (father of the late distinguished preacher of the same name at Salters' Hall, London, and great grandfather of the late highly talented and amiable minister of Cross-Street Chapel, Manchester,) who presided over them for fifty-six years, and whose memory is still held in affectionate veneration among them. He was succeeded by the Rev. Robert Jacomb, now of Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, and on the resignation of that gentleman, whose Calvinistic opinions but ill accorded with the increasing spread of Unitarianism among his hearers, Mr. Berry, then a student at Homerton, was requested to fill the vacant pulpit until the choice of the society as to their future pastor should be finally decided. Though at that time very young, and unsettled as to his theological opinions, the candid turn of his mind, his amiable disposition, and agreeable manners, soon rendered him so general a favourite, that he was solicited to remain in the office he had provisionally undertaken; and thus commenced a connexion, the harmony of which has never met with the slightest interruption, and which, strengthened as it now is by family ties and long attachment, we hope will only be dissolved by death.

The progress of the age, which has caused all minor political distinctions to merge in the two grand divisions of the friends and the enemies of social and intellectual improvement, has operated a change somewhat analogous in the religious world, which may be considered as divided into those who admit the supreme authority of reason as the interpreter of Scripture and those who do not. It is the avowal of this principle, still more than the assertion of the Divine Unity, which has drawn upon its professors the hostility of their brethren, and the Leicester congregation, with their pastor, have shared largely in the

general obloquy. With the view of softening these prejudices, and of promoting the spread of the opinions he has embraced, Mr. Berry has occasionally delivered lectures, chiefly during the winter season, which have been very numerous attended, and have, it is to be hoped, prepared the way for the prevalence of a more candid and Christian spirit hereafter.

It was at the conclusion of one of these courses in March last, that the congregation, gratified by Mr. Berry's exertions, and desirous of expressing, by some permanent memorial, the sentiments they entertained of his character and ministerial services generally, determined on presenting him with a piece of Plate.

A meeting of the subscribers was in consequence convened in the vestry of the chapel, Joshua Grundy, Esq., of the Oaks, in the Chair, when it was resolved unanimously, that a piece of Plate of the value of One Hundred Sovereigns, with the following inscription, should be presented to the Rev. Charles Berry, by the Chairman, attended by J. W. Simpson, Esq., of Rearsby, and Thomas Paget, Esq., of the High Street, Leicester, in the name of the congregation:—

To
The Rev. CHARLES BERRY,
in grateful testimony of
the fidelity, zeal, and affection,
with which, during a period of Twenty-five Years,
he has fulfilled the duties of a Christian Minister,
advocated the principles of Civil and Religious Liberty,
and adorned the intercourse of social life,
this piece of Plate was presented
at the close of a series of Lectures in vindication of
The Unitarian Doctrine,
by the Congregation of the Great Meeting,
Leicester,
March, 1828."

In conformity with this resolution a *Silver Salver*, beautifully ornamented, and bearing the above inscription, was procured from London. It cost *one hundred and ten pounds*, and has been much admired for its elegant and handsome appearance.

After having been exhibited for a few days for the gratification of public curiosity, it was presented by the Deputation before-mentioned, when Mr. Grundy addressed Mr. Berry as follows:

"Reverend and dear Sir,

"The Unitarian Society, assembling at the Great Meeting in this place, has assigned us the pleasing office of presenting to you this piece of Plate, in pursuance of a resolution passed in the vestry, which, with your permission, I will read:

"Resolved, That a piece of Plate, of the value of *One Hundred Sovereigns*, with a suitable inscription, be presented to the Rev. Charles Berry, in grateful testimony of the fidelity, zeal, and affection, with which, during a period of Twenty-five Years, he has fulfilled the duties of a Christian Minister, advocated the principles of Civil and Religious Liberty, and adorned the intercourse of social life."

"In the name of the Congregation we beg your acceptance of this Salver; not as a remuneration, but as a small token of the high esteem, the sincere respect, we entertain for your public and private character.

"Deeply as these sentiments are here engraven, be assured, Sir, they are no less deeply impressed on our minds. As the powerful advocate of our peculiar religious tenets—as the dauntless assertor of those constitutional rights which distinguish this favoured isle from surrounding nations, you are entitled to our warmest thanks.

"In you, Sir, we have ever found the faithful pastor—the able instructor—the kind companion—the constant friend. Allow us to express a hope, that by the blessing of that God, who is alone the proper object of religious worship, a connexion so auspiciously commenced, so long, so happily continued, may, at some far distant period, be dissolved by the hand of death alone."

Mr. Berry then delivered the following reply, addressed to the congregation:

"My respected Friends,

"In acknowledging your splendid present, which has been conveyed to me this day, I can hardly select words sufficient to describe my gratitude to those who have manifested to me their respect in so munificent a manner. The gift itself is costly, and is a proof of the generosity of the subscribers; but it is rendered to me most interesting and valuable by the inscription which it bears, recording the affectionate regard of those with whom I have now passed the longest and happiest portion of my life. The zeal and cordiality with which, as I have been informed, my friends have contributed on this interesting occasion, renders my gratification complete. That I am ardently attached to the principles of

civil and religious liberty, I admit; it is likewise true that I have publicly advocated the cause of what I deem sacred truth, according to my ability; yet, I fear, your partiality has formed too high an estimate of my merits; but, whatever my past services may have been, I considered myself amply rewarded by that agreeable, improving, and affectionate intercourse, which, without interruption, I have enjoyed for so many years in your society.

"I assure you, I neither expected nor wished such a magnificent testimony of your esteem as that which I now receive. I accept it with the deepest feelings of respect and gratitude; and I hope I shall be encouraged by it to devote myself still more firmly to the support of those principles by which we are in common distinguished, and on the maintenance of which depends, I am persuaded, every thing valuable in the world.

"While I live I shall make use of this piece of Plate with heart-felt satisfaction and delight; and I hope those that come after me will ever carefully preserve it, as alike honourable to the givers and the receiver.

"I am, with the most unfeigned respect and affection,

"Your Friend and Minister,

(Signed) "CHARLES BERRY.

"To the Congregation of the Great Meeting-House, Leicester. May 23, 1828."

The Deputies.

At a Meeting of the Committee of Deputies, held 11th July, 1828, it was resolved,

"That this Committee recommends to the General Meeting to sanction an arrangement for this Society and the Protestant Society defraying the expenses attendant on the Repeal Bill, in the proportions to be agreed upon by the Committee as forming part of the United Committee; this Committee being empowered to authorize the Treasurer to pay the Deputies' share; and that the General Meeting should direct their Committee to take immediate steps for addressing the congregations of the Three Denominations in town and country, on the propriety of keeping up, by donations, the usual permanent fund of this Deputation.

"That the Committee be also directed in such address to explain fully the objects of this Deputation, the state of its funds, and the purposes to which, for

many years, such funds have been appropriated, without any annual subscription or other call having been made upon the public; and the expedience and convenience of their being furnished with the means of continuing their usefulness on the same plan, by the income of a fund, the principal of which can be resorted to on any emergency.

"That the Committee be instructed, in preparing such an appeal, to consider and report to the next General Meeting whether any enlargement or alteration in the plan, constitution, or objects of this Deputation, be expedient to be adopted in the present position of the affairs of Dissenters."

At a General Meeting of the Deputies held on the same day, the minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held this day having been read, it was resolved,

"That the Resolutions entered into by the Committee be approved and adopted by this Meeting."

Test-Act Repeal Dinner.

WE are enabled to give the following Report of Mr. Aspland's Speech, from notes taken at the time:

May it please your Royal Highness,—

At the request of the Managers of this Meeting, I rise to acknowledge the honour you have done to myself and my brethren, the Protestant Dissenting Ministers, by the toast so kindly given from the Chair, and so cordially cheered by the company.

Sir, we are a humble class of men, but we may be allowed some share of Christian pride on the present occasion, and we do feel proud, that we are met to celebrate the triumph of those great principles to which we and our fathers have been devoted; in the promotion of which we have employed our small portion of talents; and for the sake of which we should have been ready, I trust, to meet privations and sufferings at the call of conscience.

Sir, you have done us honour by uniting us with the ever-memorable two thousand,—men who made a noble sacrifice of all that is dearest in this life to the great cause of truth and freedom. We cannot pretend, Sir, to their profound and varied learning, to their unspotted and exemplary manners, and to their exquisite sense of religious honour; but we do share with them, and every Dissenting minister would consider himself calumniated if it were not admitted that he did share with them, in their ardent love of liberty, civil and religious

liberty,—England's distinction, and England's happiness.

Sir, when I speak with veneration of the ever-memorable two thousand ministers who cheerfully renounced the highest interests and honours which the Church of England could confer, in order to maintain the integrity and purity of their consciences, I am not aware that I am moved by any sectarian feelings; for I look with veneration also upon those ministers of the National Church that, in the time of the Commonwealth, made equal sacrifices to their religious convictions; and I may answer, I am sure, for my Protestant Dissenting brethren, and the ministers and Protestant Dissenters in the room will bear me out in saying, that we look back with veneration likewise to the ministers of the Roman Catholic religion, (*loud applause*,) who, in times when Reason, Justice, and Mercy were trampled under foot, and when they were regarded as traitors because they were true to their religion, gave up every thing to their consciences, mistaken consciences, it may be,—(but who am I to say mistaken? They were conscious of their innocence, and felt assurance in their faith, and their own was the only conscience that could guide them)—to conscience they surrendered every thing valuable in life, and even life itself, giving to their faith the surest pledge of their sincerity,—their dying testimony. I say then, Sir, I have no sectarian feelings when I rejoice in the tribute of respect which you have paid to the memory of the two thousand Ejected Ministers: I could select two thousand names from the clergy of the Church of England, and two thousand from the Roman Catholic clergy, that have exhibited the same fearless and self-denying devotion to their honest sense of religion, and I would say, that the six thousand should be equally held in reverence and honour as a noble army of confessors and martyrs. For, Sir, allow me to say, that I regard such tried examples of the integrity that never flinches, and the conscience that nothing wordly can overcome, as a nation's wealth: no matter where the examples are found—they dignify human nature and exalt our country; and but for men of this character, England would not have obtained the liberty in which she so justly rejoices, nor would she have had the present august Family to govern her, a Family honoured by being called to the throne in order to preserve the liberties of the people. It appears to me that a Meeting like this reads a lesson

of incalculable benefit to youth, when it holds out to admiration religious integrity under any form (*loud applause*); and I am persuaded your Royal Highness will agree with me in saying, that nothing could have been more eloquent or more wise, and nothing more Christian, than the declaration of a learned and gifted prelate in his place in the House of Lords, who, when the Dissenting Claims were brought before their Lordships in 1779, said, in words never to be erased from my mind, "I am not afraid, my Lords, of men of scrupulous consciences; but I will tell you whom I am afraid of,—and they are the men that believe every thing, that subscribe every thing, and that vote for every thing."

I will not detain your Royal Highness and the company long, (*hear, hear, hear*,) but my mind is so full, my heart is so full upon the present occasion, that I cannot sit down without saying a word or two upon another topic. It is not often that we Dissenting ministers have the honour and the privilege of speaking to persons of the rank and importance of those whom I am now addressing; and therefore I take this opportunity of expressing my earnest wish that Right Honourable Lords and Honourable Members of the House of Commons would bear in mind, that whatever the Dissenters may want, and whatever Dissenting ministers may want, there is one thing they do possess; they know the history of their fathers, their sainted fathers; they know the principles of the Constitution of England, and they regard themselves as having been mainly instrumental in placing the present illustrious Family, of which your Royal Highness is so distinguished a member, upon the Throne. (*Loud applause*.) Sir, it is our boast that our fathers were mainly instrumental in that which I must ever consider a happy and glorious event; and let no member of that august House ever feel astonishment or surprise if the Dissenters, who took so active and responsible a part in their settlement in this country upon the principles of freedom, should still profess and support the same principles, even if,—a supposition I dare hardly entertain,—even if, in some inauspicious moment, any member of that House should seem to forget them. (*Tremendous applause*.)

You cannot be surprised, Sir, that Dissenting ministers hail the event that we are met to celebrate, for they know and feel that it is but the harbinger of good things to come; they regard it as a pledge to the country on the part of

the Legislature and the government, that hereafter measures of conciliation, and not of coercion, shall be pursued with regard to conscience;—and let those measures be pursued, and what grandeur, what happiness, is there to which England may not attain!

Allow me, Sir, to express one hope; I express it not for myself, but for my children, and my children's children; and I know that I express the hope and feeling of my brethren in the ministry, and of the Protestant Dissenters generally; it is, that the Repeal of the Sacramental Test is an earnest of the repeal of other tests not enacted by the government, but by corporations, and learned corporations; it is, that our country, our beloved country, our mother country, which has dealt rather hardly with us Dissenting children, which has allowed us hitherto only the crumbs of learning that have fallen from her table, will, by and by, open her bosom, her maternal bosom, (*loud applause*) and receive us to her cordial embraces; and that hereafter we Dissenters shall have our fair portion of the children's bread. (*Loud applause*)

In conclusion, allow me to say, Sir, that we Dissenting ministers have been accustomed to watch the signs of the times, as is natural to those who have been inured to storms and perils; and we have observed, as you, Sir, must have observed, with infinite pleasure, that the course of legislation in this great kingdom, for the last quarter of a century, has been all in one line, and that the straight-forward path of justice; and we can hardly doubt, we can have no doubt, that things will go on,—under that ever-adorable and merciful Providence which, amidst the commotion and confusion of human affairs, causes all things to work together for good,—to greater and greater perfection, and that the government of this country will be still more paternal and still more Christian. But let me not be mistaken; when I speak of a Christian government, God forbid that I should be thought to express a wish that the government should ally itself to a sect, that it should be Protestant as opposed to the Catholics, or Church-of-England as opposed to Dissenters. What I mean is—judging from the past and looking at all the auguries of the times—that the future government of this country, the best and the greatest country on the face of the earth, will and must be the government of the people, and for the people. (*Bravo*) Sir, let the course

of government in this country be, as it has been under the present happy reign, and as I am certain it will continue to be, wise and beneficent, and then the three great religious divisions of the country,—the members of the Church of England, the members of the Roman Catholic Church, the old church, let my Dissenting brethren remember, the church of our fathers, and the members of the various Dissenting churches,—instead of consisting of so many opposing establishments, and reckoning any one's gain another's loss, will be bound together in the bond of peace and charity, and form that triple cord that cannot be broken; in the strength of which, our Rulers (to use the words of that great man whose language has been quoted with so much felicity, and whose prose is poetry, and whom I may here quote with peculiar propriety, because he was not only an ardent lover of his country, but also a Nonconformist,—I mean John Milton) “may be able to steer the tall and goodly vessel of the Commonwealth through all the gusts and tides of the world's mutability.” (*Loud applause*.)

Unitarian Worship at Devonport.

At a Meeting of the friends of Unitarian Christianity in Devonport, held June 8, 1828, for the purpose of taking into consideration the erection of a Chapel, the following resolutions (among others) were agreed to unanimously:

1. That this meeting approve of the conduct of the Congregational Committee in purchasing the lease of a piece of ground, situate in Granby Street, for the purpose of building a Chapel for Unitarian Christian worship.

2. That as an active spirit of religious inquiry now prevails in this town and neighbourhood, which has been excited by our having kept open a room for public worship on Sunday mornings and evenings during the last eight years and a half, and by the free circulation of the books and tracts belonging to our Congregational Library, it is the decided opinion of this meeting, that the erection of a neat Chapel, as early as possible, would essentially conduce to the further extension of unadulterated truth, especially as we are liable to be deprived of the room we occupy at a quarter's notice, and in this case, there is no other eligible place in the town in which we could assemble to worship the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. That the best means for effecting this object, is, in the first place, to try what can be done among ourselves, either by donation of money or personal labour, and afterwards to solicit the aid of our friends in this neighbourhood.

4. That as the Rev. Israel Worsley, of Plymouth, is about to visit different parts of the kingdom, he be respectfully requested to solicit contributions for this purpose from those congregations and individuals who are favourably disposed to our cause.

5. That as it might prove injurious to be burthened with a heavy debt, it would be desirable to ascertain what sum it is probable we shall be able to raise before we commence the building.

6. That Messrs. Brooking, Hoggett, Perkins, Gould, and J. Martin, be requested to act as a Building Committee, and to procure as early as possible an estimate of the expense.

7. That Mr. John White be appointed Treasurer, and that he be requested to wait on our friends in Devonport, Plymouth, and Stonehouse, to solicit their assistance in furtherance of the object of this Meeting.

Signed,
SILVANUS GIBBS,
Chairman.

At a subsequent meeting it was resolved, that a printed circular, containing a statement of the case, be immediately forwarded to different parts of the kingdom.

It should be understood that the erection of a Chapel in this populous town is not now a mere speculation; the cause having had a fair trial, and proceeded with *increasing success upwards of eight years*. The members of the Society are all decided Unitarians, and are anxious to witness a more extensive diffusion of those sentiments which, from the most deliberate investigation, they consider to be pure Christian truth.

An account of the origin and progress of Unitarianism in Devonport, may be seen in the *Christian Reformer*, Vol. VI. pp. 350—353; Vol. XII. pp. 110—112, 184, 298—303; Vol. XIII. pp. 184—188.

Kent and Sussex Unitarian Association.

THE Sixteenth Anniversary of this Association was held at Tenterden, on Wednesday, June the 25th. The introductory services were conducted by the Revds. E. Talbot, of Tenterden, and W. Stevens, of Maidstone; after which, an eloquent, impressive, and highly instruc-

tive discourse was delivered by the Rev. G. Harris, of Glasgow, to a numerous and deeply attentive audience, from John xiv. 9: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." On no occasion could the words of the Psalmist have been more strikingly exemplified in the feelings of a delighted congregation, "it is good for us to be here," than the present, and certainly none could afford a richer source of exquisite and lasting enjoyment.

At the close of the service the meeting was held for transacting the business of the Association, John Brent, Esq., of Canterbury, in the chair. After the secretary had read the Report of the Committee and the usual routine of business had been disposed of, resolutions of congratulation on the repeal of the Test Acts, moved by Mr. C. Ellis and seconded by Mr. Joseph Munn, were unanimously adopted.

The members of the Association, to the number of 150, afterwards dined together in the Town Hall, the Rev. G. Harris in the chair. J. G.

Southern Unitarian Society.

THE Annual Meeting of this Society was held at Poole, on Wednesday, June 25th, when an interesting and impressive sermon was preached in the morning by the Rev. Robert Kell, of Birmingham, on the duty of cherishing an enlightened zeal in behalf of religion and truth, from 2 Cor. ix. 2; and in the evening, a truly evangelical discourse was delivered by the Rev. Russell Scott, from Mark iv. 26—29. The devotional parts of the services were conducted by the Revds. M. Maurice, B. Bristow, and E. Kell. A large and respectable company dined together between the services, Abraham Clarke, Esq., of Newport, in the chair; and many interesting addresses were delivered. At the business meeting of the Society, the Rev. M. Maurice in the chair, it was unanimously resolved that, as an expression of sincere regard for the Unitarians at Wareham, and of the deep interest which the Society takes in the prosperity of their cause, a selection of Tracts from the Society's Catalogue, to the amount of £2, be placed at their disposal. E. K.

Eastern Unitarian Association.

ON Wednesday and Thursday, the 2d and 3d of July, was held, at Yarmouth, the Anniversary of the Eastern Unitarian Association. On Wednesday even-

ing the Rev. W. J. Fox, of London, delivered an admirable and a most appropriate discourse on the Lord's Prayer to a very attentive congregation, of which the greater part were strangers. The introductory service was performed by the Rev. H. Bowles, Jun. On Thursday morning the service was introduced by the Rev. Mr. Melville, of Ipswich; and the Rev. W. J. Bakewell, of Norwich, preached from 2 Peter ii. 2, on the misrepresentations of Unitarianism, and concluded with a brief statement and defence of its doctrines. The business of the Association was transacted in the Chapel: Mr. Errington, of Yarmouth, was called to the chair. The Report was read by Mr. R. Alger, Secretary, and was ordered to be printed. It is, on the whole, satisfactory. The Rev H. Bowles, of Yarmouth, has, by a course of Sunday-evening lectures, excited considerable attention in the town; he had, during the winter months, large congregations, and has increased the regular attendance at the chapel. From Halesworth the intelligence disappointed the expectations which were raised last year. The chapel, taken on a short lease, is at present closed. This unexpected result is to be attributed to the removal of a few zealous and respectable Unitarians, on whose active co-operation our friends calculated, and in no small degree to the influence of the grossest and most persevering misrepresentation and calumny. Mr. Latham's unwearied exertions have not, however, we trust, been in vain; and his missionary labours in other parts of Suffolk promise to be more successful. The Secretary gave a gratifying report of the distribution of Tracts. It is encouraging to know that these are extensively circulated, and to believe that they are, though invisibly, promoting the emancipation of the human mind from the thralldom of superstition and ignorance. The next anniversary will be held at Diss.

More than forty of the friends of the Society dined together after the business was concluded. Mr. Robinson, of Bury, had been invited to take the chair, but as he was obliged to leave Yarmouth at a very early hour, he prevailed upon Mr. E. Taylor to preside. To this gentleman the meeting feels greatly obliged, not only for the exertions which he made to be present on the occasion, but also for the very able and edifying manner in which he discharged the duties imposed upon him.

The Society had to regret the absence

of many respected members, and in particular, of Mr. Toms, of Framlingham, the patriarch, and one of the most zealous friends, of the Association.

W. T. B.

Unitarian Tract Society for Warwickshire and the Neighbouring Counties.

On Wednesday, July 9th, the Twenty-second Annual General Meeting of the Unitarian Tract Society established in Birmingham for Warwickshire and the neighbouring Counties, was held at Kidderminster. The Rev. J. R. Wreford, of Birmingham, introduced the religious services by prayer and reading the Scriptures; and the Rev. Edward Bristow, of Birmingham, delivered an appropriate and instructive discourse from the latter clause of Romans vi. 23, in which he ably controverted the popular doctrine of the atonement, and proved that the salvation of man is effected by the free, unpurchased grace of God.

At the close of the religious services, George Talbot, Jun., Esq., was called to the chair, and the usual business of the Society was transacted. The state of the Association was pronounced to be highly flourishing. The number of its members is upwards of two hundred.

About thirty members and friends of the Society afterwards dined together in the Assembly-room, where also Mr. G. Talbot kindly filled the chair. The Rev. Messrs. Fry, Kentish, Bristow, B. Carpenter, E. Jones, T. Davis, H. Hutton, and J. R. Wreford, (Secretary,) were present, and with several other gentlemen, addressed the meeting. The recent repeal of the laws affecting Protestant Dissenters was a topic of much interest, and tended in no inconsiderable degree to heighten the enjoyment which was experienced. A lively feeling prevailed and was expressed in behalf of all men, and especially of our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects, who are sufferers for conscience' sake; and the complete establishment of civil and religious liberty was fondly anticipated and regarded as "a consummation devoutly to be wished."

J. R. W.

Sussex Unitarian Association.

THE Annual Meeting of the Sussex Unitarian Association will be held at Lewes, on Wednesday, August 13th. The Rev. E. Tagart, of York Street, will officiate on the occasion.

*Old Presbyterian Chapel, Hall Bank,
Buxton.*

Services in the Season of 1828.

- July 20. Rev. James Brooks, Hyde.
 27. Edwd. Higginson, Derby.
 Aug. 3. R. B. Aspland, Chester.
 10. Nathaniel Philipps, D. D.,
 Sheffield.
 17. John Hincks, Liverpool.
 24. H. H. Piper, Norton.
 31. J. Brettell, Rotherham.
 Sept. 7. Franklin Howarth, Roch-
 dale.
 14. John G. Robberds, Man-
 chester.
 21. Robert Smethurst, Mon-
 ton.
 28. Edward Hawkes, Pendle-
 bury.

Morning Service, at Eleven o'clock.—
 Evening Service, at Half-past Six.

FOREIGN.
CALCUTTA.

Unitarian Mission.

[From the Bengal Hurkaru and Chronicle
 of 2d Jan., 1828.]

AGREEABLY to public announcement, a General Meeting of the Friends and Supporters of Unitarian Christianity in Calcutta, was held at the Hurkaru Public Rooms, on Saturday evening, the 30th Dec. After an appropriate prayer by the Rev. W. Adam, Theodore Dickens, Esq., was called to the Chair.

The Chairman introduced the object of the Meeting by briefly stating the circumstances under which the Calcutta Unitarian Committee was formed in 1821, the small number of individuals that originally composed it, the difficulties with which they had to contend, and the increasing interest which has begun to be felt in their labours both in India, in England, and in America. He remarked that all who were present, in proportion as their minds were interested in the promotion of pure and rational religion, must feel that their nature was elevated and improved, and although he saw several around him better qualified than himself to preside at this meeting, yet he was grateful for the honour which was done him, and yielded to none in the great importance which he attached to the objects of the Committee, and in his anxious desire to extend the blessings of Unitarian Christianity to those who were prejudiced against its principles, or ignorant of its truths. He then called upon Mr. Adam, the Secre-

tary, to read the Report; but as it was too long for perusal at one time, only extracts were read, the whole being intended for publication.

The design of the Report was stated to be, to communicate information to Unitarian Christians in different parts of the world, respecting what has been done, what is doing, and what is proposed to be done, for the promotion of Unitarian Christianity in India. The first endeavour of the Committee after its institution, was to secure foreign co-operation; in which they have succeeded to a considerable extent, both American and English Unitarians having contributed liberally to aid them in their labours. The first object accomplished by their united means, has been the employment of a Unitarian Missionary, and another object for the attainment of which a public subscription has been opened, is the erection of a Chapel for English worship in Calcutta. The latter object was especially urged in the Report as essential to give full efficiency to the mission. After detailing the proceedings and intentions of the Committee for the diffusion of religion and knowledge by means of lectures to the Natives, schools, tracts, &c., a summary view was given of the state of the funds which were classed under three separate heads, the Permanent Fund amounting to Sa. Rs. 25,000, the interest of which is applied to the support of a Missionary; the Chapel Fund having a cash balance of about Sa. Rs. 9000 in its favour after the purchase of ground for 12,000 Rs., besides Calcutta subscriptions still remaining unpaid to the amount of 5 or 6000 Rs; and the General Fund, or Fund for contingent expenses, which consists of annual, quarterly, and monthly subscriptions, and donations, amounting to 160 Rs. per month. Adverting to the defective organization of the Committee, occasioned by the peculiar circumstances in which it had taken its origin, the gentlemen composing it recommended a more complete organization, under a new and more comprehensive name, that of the BRITISH INDIAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION, and with that view proposed a series of Resolutions for the consideration of the meeting.

The first Resolution was moved by Bahoo Durakanath Thakoor and seconded by Mr. Smith—That this meeting does hereby form itself into a Society which shall be called the British Indian Unitarian Association, having the same objects and principles as the Calcutta

Unitarian Committee, assuming all the responsibilities of that Committee, and receiving their rights, titles, powers, and properties.

The second Resolution was moved by Baboo Tarachund Chuckruburtee and seconded by Mr. Sutherland—That the members of the Calcutta Unitarian Committee be requested to act as the Committee of the British Indian Unitarian Association for the ensuing year, under the rules and regulations framed by the Calcutta Unitarian Committee for itself, with power to supply vacancies in their own number; and that the Committee be requested to frame and submit to the next Annual Meeting such further regulations as may appear necessary to give efficiency to the Association.

Mr. Sutherland seconded this Resolution. He observed that the talents and worth of the gentlemen nominated, and the esteem in which they were universally held in this Society, rendered it unnecessary for him to say any thing in favour of such a nomination. He believed that when a Unitarian Chapel should be erected in Calcutta, it would be numerous and respectably attended, and that the principles of Unitarian Christianity would be the only effectual means of dissipating that thick cloud of superstition which has so long hung over this land. He hoped he might observe without offence to any one present, (alluding to the native gentlemen,) that in no country in the world was the spread of rational religion an object of more interest to the philanthropist than in British India. Yet let it not be supposed that in India alone superstition exerted its debasing influence. Instances of it were of frequent occurrence in countries esteemed infinitely more enlightened, and he hoped he might be excused for mentioning one example of it which had recently come to his knowledge. Because in his mortal agonies the late Mr. Canning, whose loss Britain now deplores, the brightest star in the galaxy of talent that ever adorned the office of Premier, had no minister of religion in his chamber, it was alleged that he was an Atheist! A more revolting example of bigotry was never recorded!

Mr. Sutherland concluded by expressing his opinion, that within the past year more especially, the number of those disposed to listen to the doctrines of Unitarianism had greatly increased, and his conviction that the labours of the Association would be attended with success.

The third Resolution was moved by Mr. Adam and seconded by Mr. Gordon—That this meeting views with deep interest the combined exertions of English and American Unitarians, to establish a mission in this country, pledges itself to zealous and persevering co-operation with them, confides in their continued sympathy and aid in the prosecution of the object, and earnestly solicits the assistance and countenance of such Unitarians, both in Europe and America, as have hitherto withheld their support.

Mr. Adam, in moving the resolution, pointed out the limited resources of the English and American Unitarians, the number and importance of their domestic institutions, and the proof of deep interest in a foreign mission which was furnished by the very liberal and disinterested pecuniary aid which, under these circumstances, they had afforded to the Calcutta Unitarian Committee. To shew the extent of the interest felt in this object, he enumerated the various places in England and Scotland from which subscriptions in aid of the Calcutta Mission had been derived. He also read a letter which he had just received from Baboo Prusunnu Comar Tagore, expressing that gentleman's regret that he was prevented by serious indisposition from being present, and stating that he was and should continue to be a warm friend to the cause of liberal religion.

The fourth Resolution was moved by Rammohun Roy, and seconded by Mr. Tate—That this meeting invites all Unitarians, whether Christian or Hindoo, in every part of India, to form themselves into Associations auxiliary to the British Indian Unitarian Association, and to place themselves in communication with the Secretary of that Association.

We regretted to observe that Rammohun Roy was labouring under severe bodily indisposition at the time. We understand that he has since, in some measure, recovered from an attack of rheumatism under which he was then suffering.

At one of the intervals between the seconding of one resolution and the moving of another, several questions were asked by a gentleman (Mr. Douglas) respecting the rate of subscription, the constitution of the Committee, the disposal of the funds, &c., which were answered by the Chairman apparently to the perfect satisfaction of the meeting.

The Chairman again addressed the meeting, congratulating those who were present on the unanimity which had at-

tended the proceedings of the evening, and on the encouragement which they afforded to the friends of Unitarian Christianity in Calcutta, to proceed with firmness and zeal in the prosecution of the high and important purposes for which they were united.

The meeting was then closed by a short extempore prayer by Mr. Adam.

We observed that a distinguished foreign traveller, Count Vidua, was present, besides several other gentlemen of respectability. The auditors appeared to be much interested in the proceedings.

IRELAND.

SYNOD OF ULSTER.

Important Discussion on the Subject of Trinitarianism.

Cookstown, June 27, 1828.

THE interesting discussion, on the subject of introducing such restrictive laws into the discipline of the SYNOD OF ULSTER as will effectually check the progress of Anti-Trinitarian principles in that body, came on to-day, by the introduction of a number of resolutions, which had been prepared on the previous evening, at a meeting of some Trinitarian members of the body.

Mr. MORELL (Ballibay) rose to move these resolutions. He said he would not detain the house with a recapitulation of the reasons which induced him to bring forward the motion he was about to propose for the adoption of Synod. These reasons he had before stated. He would now only say, that his object was to secure peace and unity to the Synod of Ulster; and although he would sacrifice much for the obtaining of those objects, yet there were things which he could not give up, to obtain a temporary, but dangerous and insecure, repose for this body. He could not give up his Bible; he could not give up his reliance for salvation on the Lord Jesus Christ, to procure this unity. He had heard an unfortunate expression yesterday, of a gentleman in that assembly, who had quoted the example of Jesus in allowing Judas to remain with him even when he knew he was about to betray him into the hands of his enemies; but if that gentleman found the example of Judas a good illustration of the situation in which that gentleman stood towards the Synod of Ulster, it is not to be expected he (Mr. Morell) would pin his faith on his sleeve. Mr. Morell then moved the following resolutions:

1. "That many of the evils that now unhappily exist in the Synod of Ulster, have arisen from the admission of persons, as preachers of the Gospel, who are ignorant of the truth as it is in Jesus, unrenewed in the spirit of their minds, and, consequently, destitute of that zeal which is necessary for the dissemination of the Gospel of Christ.

2. "That while we are individually bound to use all scriptural means to guard against the continuance of these evils, it is also our duty, as a church, to adopt such regulations as may, with the Divine blessing, prove effectual to prevent the introduction of ministers unenlightened by the Spirit of God, and to advance spiritual religion in our church courts and congregations.

3. "That before any person be recognized as a candidate for the ministry in the church, he shall be enjoined to present himself at an annual meeting, previously to his entering a theological class, before a Committee of the Synod, who shall examine him respecting his personal religion, his knowledge of the Scriptures, and especially his views of the doctrines of the Trinity, Justification by Faith, and Regeneration by the Spirit; and his motives for offering himself as a candidate for the sacred office of a minister of the gospel.

4. "That students, after having finished their theological course, and their trials in the Presbytery, shall again present themselves for a similar examination before the same Committee; and it shall be the duty of that Committee to ascertain their soundness in the faith, by requiring from them a statement of their views of the doctrines contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith.

5. "That if any person thus licensed shall afterwards be found not to preach the doctrines of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, or to avow any principles in opposition to those doctrines, he shall not be continued in fellowship with the ministers of this body.

6. "Should any person be licensed or ordained in opposition to the above regulations, such license or ordination shall not be deemed valid by this body."

Mr. CARLILE moved, that the resolutions be adopted. On various grounds he approached the subject with deep feeling, and, in the outset, he acknowledged the difficulties that surrounded him. He was placed amidst so many conflicting elements, that he was scarcely able clearly to see his way. He had not his own individual views to consult

on this occasion, and he could not bring forward that which he would in all respects approve. He did not like the public agitation of such a subject, lest it should put a stop to the operations of an amending and purifying principle which had for some time been abroad in the body. He would not have gone so far as those resolutions, but he must concede a good deal to the views of others; and as all that could be substantially required was found in them, others, as well as he, should concede something. He liked the proposed plan, because it did not go to amend the state of the body by any specific act, for he could not conceive a regulation by which a body could make itself pure. Should a division of the Synod take place, he could not pretend to say which side would be the purer—those who retired or those who stayed. Like, he would not say an able, but a wise tactician, he had been preparing a retreat from the difficulties with which the body was threatened—a mode of keeping up the house before it came tumbling about his ears. He liked a gradual reformation, and he would leave the actual reformation in the hands of the Spirit of the Great God. The proposed resolutions went no farther than an appeal to the innate power of truth, and there they left the matter. But he also approved of them, because they were impartial. They did not affix a stigma on any particular body; but acknowledged generally that there are evils in the Synod arising from past laxity. Though Arians may suppose that they are particularly referred to, yet, for himself, he did not specifically refer to them. There was more to lament on the side of the orthodox themselves, and he more deeply deplored the corruptions on that side, than those on the side of the Arians. So far as he was concerned, he understood them to contemplate corruptions in general, though others might attach to them a more specific application. They seemed simply to recognize what was an incumbent duty, independently of any code of discipline, viz. that in our public and private capacity, we should endeavour to ascertain the Christian character of every man who offers himself as a candidate for the ministry, and to resist the introduction of every one whose character and principles are doubtful. The first inquiry is, whether the individual be a Christian; and, secondly, whether he is qualified for the ministerial office. The Synod were bound to this, both by the word of God

and the reason of the thing. The reason why he can sit in the same church court with Arians is, that by the constitution of the body he can freely bear testimony to the truth. Were it an understood thing that he should acquiesce in measures merely because they had been voted by a majority, he could not for a moment longer be connected with it; but because he had the privilege of withstanding error, on that ground he could sit and deliberate in ecclesiastical affairs with any body. The scriptural phrases about withdrawing from heretics, and "coming out from among them," had been often brought forward, and as regularly misunderstood. He comes out from Arians when he testifies against them, as he comes out from the world when he testifies against its practices, though he may be living in the midst of it. It was not by changing his locality that this command of God was obeyed. Conscientious Arians might regard themselves as bound to bring into the Synod men of their principles, as well as we. This he would not expect an Arian to give up. Observe then how the plan will work. A person appears before a Presbytery, and both parties are bound to act upon the same general principle. On examination, the orthodox party come to the conclusion that he is not a Christian, or that his views do not coincide with those which they can sanction. Of course, they endeavour to keep him out, while others are equally anxious to keep him in. Suppose that he is licensed to preach, the orthodox are bound to protest, and, if necessary, to report the matter to the Synod. In case of an orthodox candidate, the Arians are bound to do the same. Hence, young men would take their certificates either from one side or other of the Presbytery, and, consequently, it would be known at once what were the views of the licentiate. For his own part, he would not, in the present state of the Synod, give any thing for the recommendation of a Presbytery. He had rather take a single letter from a judicious friend, in attestation of a minister's character, so long as Arians and Trinitarians are playing into each others' hands. Those congregations who wish for an Arian minister, will look to one side of the certificate, while those who think differently will regard the other. It might be objected that this would produce a warfare all over the country, but there must of necessity be a warfare—a perpetual struggle between light and darkness. He

did not mean by these expressions to convey any offensive sentiment, but just to elucidate the fact, that the parties would be constantly opposed to each other. He hoped that by a faithful discharge of their duty, the places of the Arians would be filled up with orthodox men; he did not conceal his wish that it should be so; but of one thing he was certain, that a human test was not the way to do it. Another objection was, the holding of ministerial communion with men of contrary sentiments: but whatever was the meaning of the objection, he either did not understand it, or did not concur in it. Communion in Scripture, means a communion of spirit and affection. He had no difficulty, for instance, in holding communion with Mr. Montgomery in money matters, or in ordinary business of the Synod. But, in propagating the gospel, he could not hold communion with any of the orthodox, who was a worldly-minded man, with one who was intent on the accumulation of wealth, and who would give £10 or £20 to the service of Satan, while he would with difficulty dole out some five shillings to promote the cause and work of God. With such a man he could not hold communion. Another ground that was set up was, that there was no standard for this body but the Word of God. The Christians' Church was bound to set forward the Sacred Scriptures as the only book that contains rules of faith. It was said, we must have some definition of what the Scriptures mean. He did not think so; he had again and again sought for the grounds of this assertion in the Bible, but he had sought in vain. He saw there nothing of the sort, and he could not conscientiously accede to it. If a man professes to believe the Bible, he ought to be received. On that profession, he could recognize him as a Christian, but without examination of his life and character, he could not recognize him as a Christian minister. This was the simple mode pursued in primitive times. We are to judge of him by our own conceptions of what the Bible requires; but there was no criterion by which one part of the Synod could be set apart as Christians, and the others not. That must be determined by the whole temper, and spirit, and character of the man. Instead of setting up logical men to make a creed or code of laws out of the Scripture, the Scripture itself should be our creed. To it we should constantly refer; and instead of bringing with us our codes of discipline, we should bring our Bibles, and till we do this, we shall

never attain the character of a Scripture Church. Instead of suspending over those to whom the examination of our young men is entrusted, the terrors of the church, we should declare, with the Bible in our hands, whether they have done their duty or not. Church censures are easily got over, but the authority of the Bible is not so readily dispensed with. Our meetings would thus be rid of the legal forms, and a weight and a solemnity would be imparted to our proceedings. There was no intention of driving Arians out of the Synod, but there was an intention of driving out Arianism. The parties might go together, so far as they agree, and when they cannot, they might hold separate meetings, without trenching on the integrity of this body. This is what is meant by withdrawing. Let men thus withdraw, when they cannot keep together, and let them keep together when they can. This was the Redeemer's mode of procedure with the Pharisees, and that of Paul with the Jews at Ephesus and elsewhere. The Jews were then all either Arians, or rather Socinians; yet he did not separate from them, till they contradicted and blasphemed; and whenever the Arians of the Synod of Ulster get up and contradict and blaspheme, he (Mr. C.) will leave them, but not till they make the Synod too hot to hold him. Again, he supported the resolutions, because the Synod might rest satisfied in them, and because they would save the necessity of driving out men, under whose authority he as well as others came into that Synod. Would they turn out the very men from whom they had received their ministry? He spoke in relation to those members of Synod who had been ordained by Arians. They, in particular, should lay down the ministry. They had it then from an impure source, and would any man tell him that he should go to the street and permit a parcel of porters to set him apart to the ministry? But he would exemplify his reasoning. In the Synod of Munster, one of our students has been introduced—a young man of orthodox principles—he meant Mr. Ferris, of Fethard. Amongst those Arians he is permitted peaceably to act, and to bear testimony to the truth, and if so, he asked any sober-minded man, what is Mr. Ferris to do? Would you advise him to withdraw, and come out from among them? Now he (Mr. C.) would really and conscientiously say to Mr. Ferris, Do not. If they require from you any thing contrary to your principles—if they make the Synod too hot for you, then with-

draw. Suppose Mr. Ferris should succeed in getting his principles gradually introduced into the Synod till he had secured a majority, is he then to turn the corner and expel those men who had kindly and affectionately received him? On the contrary, would not his individual success be an earnest where the testimony is increased, that the Synod would soon become an orthodox body? In the Established Church, the members were not at liberty to agitate and divide, and hence an advancement of spiritual religion had taken place. This was a lesson to us—we had had experience of it—miracles had been wrought amongst us by the simple operation of advice and testimony. When he (Mr. C.) first came to the Synod, no man would have been mad enough to propose the expulsion of Arians. They had then a most decided influence; but it was a cowardly resolution, the very moment we had secured a majority, that our consciences should begin to work, and that we should turn out the very men who brought us in. An attempt to purify a religious body by a general principle of separation has always failed, and it puts a damper on affectionate religion. Amongst ourselves it has had a deadening effect on it. Look to the separation of the Antrim Presbytery. Did that extinguish Arianism? But if we once adopt the principle of separation, do the gentlemen imagine it will stop there? Would they not split among themselves? and by their principles they would be bound to do so. With an Atheist he would hold communion in the promotion of a benevolent institution—with a Deist in the belief of a Supreme Being, and with an Arian in all things about which they were agreed. He would not apply to this body a principle which does not apply to the lay members of every congregation. On the principles of some members of this body, they ought to go to every member of their congregations, to scrutinize his opinions, and refuse to take stipend, and expel from them every individual who differed from them. If this be not likely to promote the good of congregations, is it likely to promote that of this body? It will, however, he said, Let us do this first, but I ask, do you really contemplate the other? (Yes, yes, from one of the back seats.) Well, I am glad to find men prepared to go such lengths. When the matter was brought to his own doors, I thought no man would answer Yes. He would propose the arrangements contemplated in the resolutions, in which, however, he did not put much trust. He hoped the

separation of the Synod would not be pressed—it was as contrary to the mind of the Spirit of God, as it was destructive to the interests of that body.

Mr. COOKE rose to propose an amendment to the original motion. Before he proceeded to speak to the question, he begged to correct a mistake that had been made, he did not say intentionally, in a public paper, regarding an expression used by him on an early day in the present meeting. He did not complain of this; he merely wished to set himself right with the house. Indeed, he felt he had been subjected to the same kind of misrepresentations at the last meeting in Strabane. He would, however, before the separation of this Synod, expose those calumnies under which he had lain for twelve months. He preferred waiting till the present time to do this, rather than contradict them in another way. He had, in the report of some expressions which had fallen from him, on Tuesday last, whilst speaking on the subject of the clerkship, been made to say, "he declared before God." Now, what would persons not present in this house, say, on reading this expression in the public newspapers? What would the Quakers say, when they read of a member of this religious body swearing in such a profane manner? He again repeated, he did not complain of it—but he wished to put himself right with the house.*

* The objectionable phrase was published in a report of Mr. Cooke's speech in *The Northern Whig* of Thursday, 26th inst. Any candid person acquainted with the difficulty of taking down the exact words of a public speaker, in a crowded assembly, in the midst of a heated and hurried debate, would pardon the substitution of the expression, "declare before God," for "*solemnly* declare"—which Mr. Cooke admits were the words he used. But without stopping to inquire into the metaphysical distinction between "*solemnly* declare" and "declaring before God," we venture to aver, that Mr. Cooke used the very phrase put down by our reporter. In this assertion, our reporter is supported by the testimony of several persons who were in the house at the time when the speech supposed to contain the objectionable expression was delivered. Indeed, Mr. Cooke knows, or ought to know, that it is a phrase used by him in almost every address in which he finds it necessary to pledge himself to the veracity of what he is stating. The truth of this assertion can be supported by any person who has ever

Mr. MONTGOMERY.—I recollect perfectly, that Mr. Cooke used some very solemn expressions at the time referred to.

Mr. COOKE—I did—I said, “I solemnly declare.”—Mr. Cooke then proceeded to introduce his amendment. The reformation proposed was not a mere reformation from Arianism. It was designed to extend much farther, and to affect the corruptions of the orthodox themselves. He did not by this mean, that he himself did not individually need reformation both in point of zeal and ministerial faithfulness. He

heard Mr. Cooke speak twice in public. There is one thing in this affair at which we much rejoice: Mr. Cooke has now, it would appear, become very careful of the phrases which he finds necessary to employ in his harangues. He knows very well, that this was formerly not the case. Let any one not present at Strabane, in June, 1827, inquire from those who were, (for Mr. Cooke intends to impugn our report of his speeches there,) whether Mr. Cooke was so delicate about his expressions on that occasion; and he will learn that the appeals of Mr. Cooke and his friends called forth loud exclamations of horror, at the moment they passed the lips of the speakers. If Mr. Cooke himself be doubtful on this point, he can refer to his friend Mr. Carlile, of Dublin, who frequently interrupted several of Mr. Cooke's supporters, by declaring that they were uttering “blasphemy!” Though we are no prophets, nor do we *pretend* to be possessed of a tithe of the apostolic sanctity of Mr. Cooke, yet we did last year venture to assert, that we would cure Mr. Cooke of what we conceived a great drawback to his powerful eloquence—a too frequent use of appeals to divine and sacred things—such as “crowns of glory”—“blood of Christ”—“wounds of conscience”—and the cure thereof by the influence of the “Holy Ghost.” We may now venture to assert, from what fell from Mr. Cooke on last Saturday, that he is much amended in this unbecoming fault. We hope, for his own sake—for we esteem him much—that he will go on improving, under our wholesome directions. Should he improve as much to our mind, in every other matter, as he has done in the chastening of his eloquence, he will very soon become a great favourite with us; and, as such, shall undoubtedly be raised to a very elevated niche in the temple of fame, through the commendation—and recommendation—of *The Northern Whig*.

was really willing to go no farther than the resolutions proposed by Mr. Carlile, but he was willing to be convinced that he was wrong in the course he wished to adopt. His own opinion was, that the Synod should be separated, but he really wished to be convinced that he was wrong there too. The proposed resolutions were too vague and undefined—they amounted in fact to nothing, and that was the reason why Mr. Carlile supported them, and that was the reason why he also wished to amend them. They are so expressed that every man can take his own meaning out of them. Mr. Carlile had said, that till the Jews blasphemed, Paul did not separate from them; and that till this is done, no separation should ever take place; and he (Mr. Cooke) just thought so too, and this was one of his reasons for wishing an immediate separation. He never supposed that a church court can turn any man out of his congregation. On this subject, he had submitted for twelve months to a foul misrepresentation of his sentiments, which he would correct in due time. He would most probably himself separate, if some measure leading to a final separation is not adopted. He would do it, he was convinced, with a very small minority; but whether with ten, twelve, or twenty, he will do it, though he had not yet fully made up his mind. Respectability does not depend on numbers; and he was assured he would separate with the blessing of God, and in the simple enjoyment of the Saviour's promise, “Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” It had been asked, would we apply to congregations the principles which we apply to the Synod? But Mr. Carlile forgets that there are differences of offices. He (Mr. Cooke) does carry the principle into his congregation, and it ought to be carried into every congregation. He baptizes the children of none who have not given a satisfactory profession of their faith; and if any whose principles are dubious apply for admission to the communion, they are refused. When Mr. Carlile talked of stipends constituting a title to church membership, he forgot his Bible. Was Darius a member of the Jewish Church, because he paid stipends to the temple? In a certain congregation in Belfast, Roman Catholics have seats and pay stipends, and are they members of the church? Really, this is one of the most extraordinary doctrines ever advanced; but the fact is, the payment of stipends is a mere temporal arrangement

with the Congregational Committee, and has nothing whatever to do with church privileges. His Majesty's Government pay us stipends, and I dare say they do not to this hour know that they are members of the Presbyterian Church. (A laugh.) Mr. Cooke then read the following amendment:—

1. "That many of the evils that now unhappily exist in the General Synod of Ulster, have arisen from the admission of persons holding Arian sentiments, contrary to the accredited standards of this body, as founded on the word of God; from the occasional admission of others, who, though nominally holding in sound words and profession the form of godliness, were yet deniers of the power thereof, and, consequently, destitute of that zeal which is necessary to the dissemination of the gospel.

2. "That while we are individually bound to use all scriptural means to guard against the continuance of these evils, it is also our duty, as a church, to adopt such regulations as may, with the Divine blessing, prove effectual to prevent the introduction of ministers unenlightened by the Spirit of God, and to advance spiritual religion in our church courts and congregations.

3. "That before any person be recognized as a candidate for the ministry, he shall, previously to entering a theological class, be enjoined to present himself at our annual meeting, to be examined by a Committee of this Synod, respecting his personal religion, his knowledge of the Scriptures, especially his views of the doctrines of the Trinity, Original Sin, Justification by Faith, and Regeneration by the Holy Spirit; and likewise as to his motives for offering himself as a candidate for the sacred office of the ministry; and that should any such examinant be found opposed to those doctrines, or appear to be destitute

of vital godliness, he shall, in no case, be recognized as a candidate for the ministry in this Synod.

4. "That Students, after having finished their theological course, and their trials in the Presbytery, shall again present themselves for a similar examination before the same Committee; and it shall be the duty of that Committee to ascertain their soundness in the faith, by requiring from them a statement of their views of the doctrines contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith.

5. "That if any person thus licensed be afterwards found not to preach the doctrines of the Trinity, Original Sin, and Justification by Faith, and Regeneration by the Holy Spirit, or to avow any principles in opposition to these doctrines, he shall not be continued in fellowship with this body.

6. "Persons who are already preachers in this body, but have not been licensed according to these regulations, shall, previously to ordination, be required to undergo a similar examination.

7. "Should any person be licensed or ordained in opposition to these regulations, such license or ordination shall not be deemed valid by this body.

8. "The Committee for these examinations shall annually be appointed in open Synod."

[We shall pursue this Report in our next Number, at present stating the result, which was on a division as follows:

99 Ministers voted "PASS."

40 Elders do. do.

—
139 "PASS."

40 Ministers voted "NOT PASS."

17 Elders do. do.

—
57 "NOT PASS."

Majority for the Amendment, 82.]

CORRESPONDENCE.

From a desire to commence reporting the interesting proceedings of the Ulster Synod, (on which we must postpone any comments,) we have been obliged to curtail the reports of the Meetings of Societies sent during this month, and to omit some other communications.

In future the Monthly Repository will be under the conduct of one responsible Editor. We have great pleasure in expressing our belief that the arrangement which has fortunately been formed, will be appreciated as it deserves; and that the new Editor will meet with efficient assistance and co-operation, in the awakened zeal and public spirit of those with whom it mainly lies to give variety and value to the pages of the periodical connected with their religious denomination.

"A steady Nonconformist" suggests the devoting of St. Bartholomew's Day, when the 2000 were cast out for conscience' sake, to the great cause of religious liberty; and that appropriate sermons be preached on that day (Sunday, the 24th of August) by Dissenting Ministers of all denominations.